

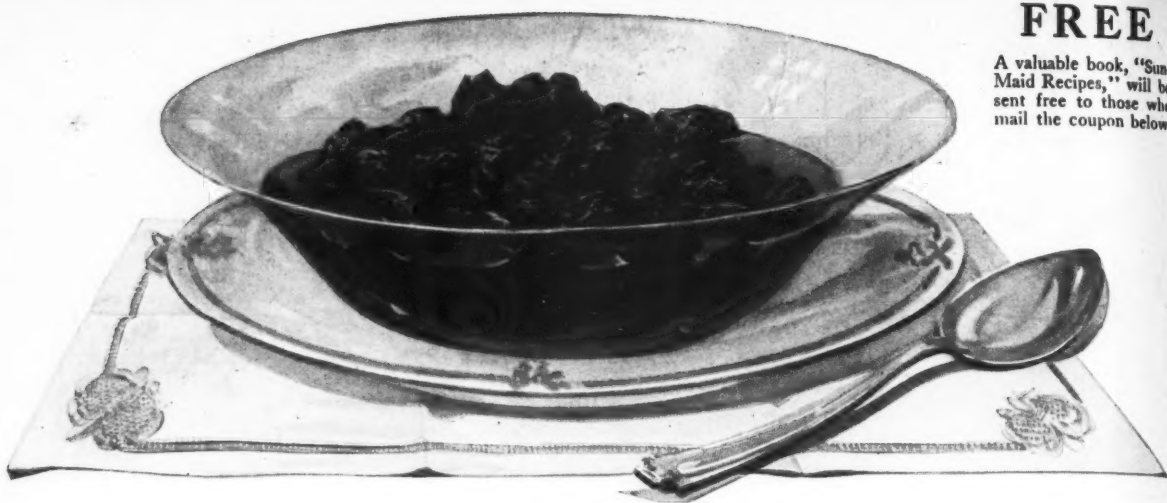
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COSMOPOLITAN

America's Greatest Magazine

A Love Song. By HARRISON FISHER

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Ffolliott Dare, the heroine of "The First Night," the new serial by Arthur Somers Roche—beginning next month.

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"I'll use that," said Arthur Somers Roche, who was present.

A few days later I went to luncheon with him again, and he told me the plot for the first instalment of "The First Night," a four-part mystery serial which begins in September COSMOPOLITAN.

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THE EDITOR

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Cosmopolitan, 119 West 40th Street, New York

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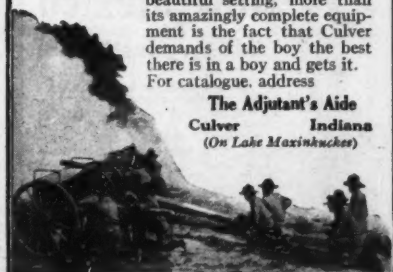


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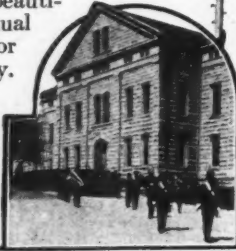
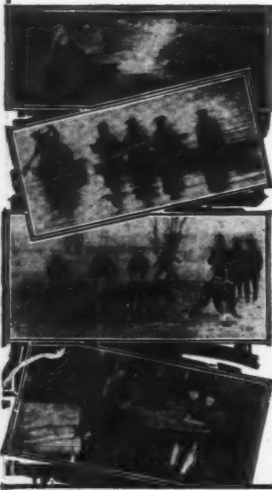
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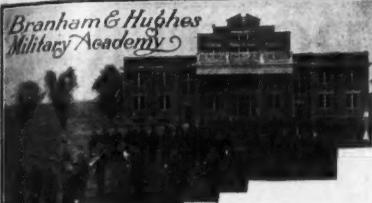
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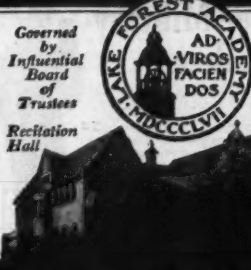
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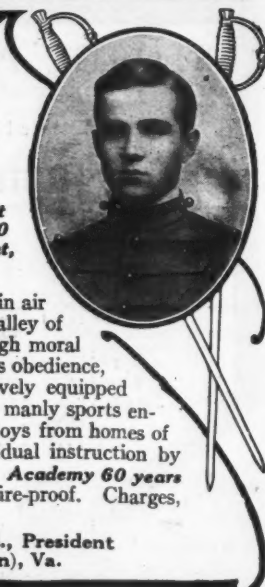
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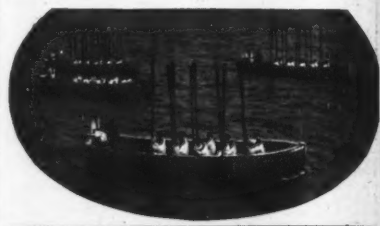
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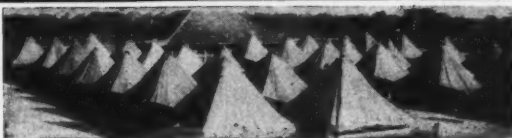
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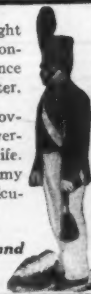
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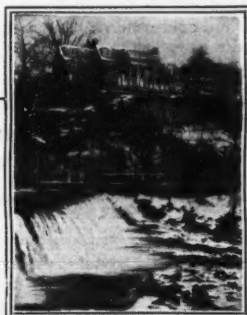


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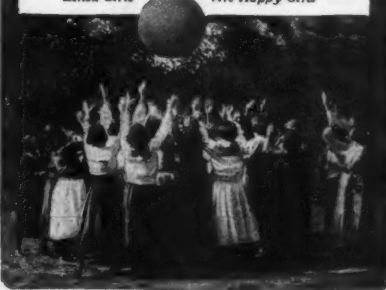
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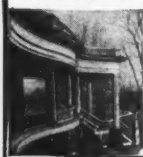
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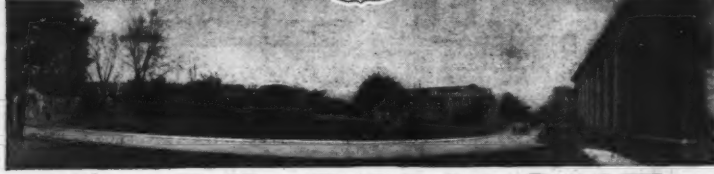
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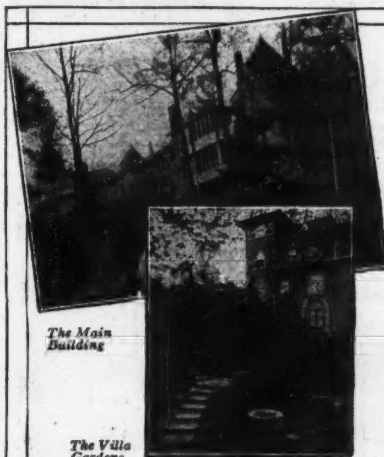
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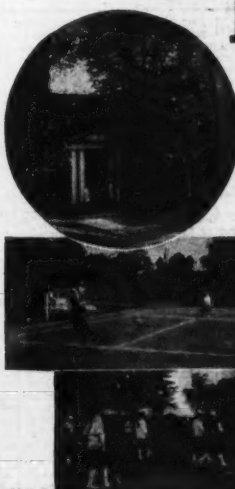
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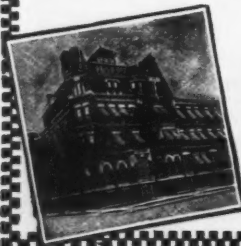
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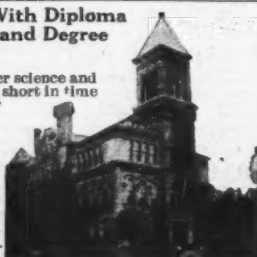
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The price your time may bring depends on the available supply in general of men like you. In other words, on the number of individuals who can deliver like services.

Now, there are men without number who can fill the routine jobs in business, the clerkships, etc. In small positions the supply of men is always greater than the demand. Naturally, the pay in that class cannot be large.

On the other hand, there are comparatively few competent men available for the important positions. The demand in this field exceeds the supply—so much so that an A-1 specialist in any line of business—a capable Sales or Advertising or Traffic Manager or an expert in Accounting, Finance, Correspondence or Production—can practically name his own price.

Take Advantage of this Law

By a natural law you are assured of the sun rising tomorrow at a certain hour.

By another law—that of supply and demand—you are assured that, becoming an expert in some branch of business, you become, ipso facto, a high-priced commodity on the man market.

Why not, therefore, become an expert in some special field of business? You can do it. You have ability. Almost every man of ordinary education possesses the ability to do bigger things.

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Right now—while holding your present job you can be preparing yourself for an executive role in business. Through the LaSalle "Problem Method" of home-training you can be making yourself a tried and proven expert in the particular specialty to which you aspire.

The LaSalle "Problem Method" is practical training,

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"She had longed to be successful, gay, triumphant"

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When failure hurts the most

ARE you having the good times other girls have? Or when you come home from the party where you longed to be successful, gay, triumphant—do you suffer from a feeling of disappointment—defeat?

Many a girl is made awkward and self-conscious merely through the knowledge that she has an unattractive complexion—that her skin is spoiled by blackheads or ugly little blemishes—is dull and colorless, or coarse in texture.

Yet with the right care you can change any of these conditions. As a matter of fact, your skin changes in spite of you—each day old skin dies and new takes its place. By using the right treatment you can give this new skin the clear smoothness and lovely fresh color you have always longed for.

What is the matter with your skin?

Perhaps your skin is spoiled by that most distressing trouble—the continual breaking out of ugly little blemishes.

To free your skin from blemishes, begin, tonight, to use this treatment:

Just before you go to bed, wash in the usual way with Woodbury's Facial Soap and warm water, finishing with a dash of cold water. Then dip the tips of your fingers in warm water and rub them on the cake of Woodbury's until they are covered with a heavy cream-like lather. Cover each blemish with

a thick coat of this and leave it on for ten minutes. Then rinse very carefully, first with clear hot water, then with cold.

Supplement this treatment with the regular use of Woodbury's Facial Soap in your daily toilet. This will help to keep the new skin that is constantly forming free from blemishes.

How you can tell that your skin is responding

The very first time you use this treatment it will leave your skin with a slightly drawn, tight feeling. Do not regard this as a disadvantage—it is an indication that the treatment is doing you good, for it means that your skin is responding in the right way to a more thorough and stimulating kind of cleansing. After one or two treatments this drawn feeling will disappear, and your skin will gain a new clearness and loveliness.

Special treatments for each one of the commoner skin troubles—for an oily skin, conspicuous nose pores, blackheads, etc., are given in the famous booklet of treatments that is wrapped around every cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap.

Get a cake of Woodbury's today, at any drug store or toilet goods counter—begin tonight the treatment your skin needs. Within a week or ten days you

will notice a marked improvement in your complexion.

A 25-cent cake of Woodbury's lasts for a month or six weeks of any treatment and for general cleansing use.

"Your treatment for one week"

Send 25 cents for a dainty miniature set of the Woodbury skin preparations, containing the treatment booklet, "A Skin You Love to Touch;" a trial size cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap; and samples of the new Woodbury Facial Cream, Woodbury's Cold Cream, and Facial Powder. Address The Andrew Jergens Co., 1608 Spring Grove Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio. If you live in Canada, address The Andrew Jergens Co., Limited, 1608 Sherbrooke Street, Perth, Ontario.



A WORD OF ADVICE ABOUT ADVICE

Given by GEORGE ADE—America's Greatest Humorist

THE cream of all jobs is that of perching on the fence and telling the other fellow how to saw wood.

If you have a bad cold, a punctured tire, a temperamental wife, or a crooked partner, then Mr. John J. Wiseman will pause beside you and your predicament long enough to complicate the situation by mixing in some wordy counsel. Advice is the first gift laid in the dimpled hands of childhood and the last kick directed at the withered buttocks of old age.

It is the only item of ostensible value which one receives every day without asking for it. Advice will continue to be served in large portions because each gift carries with it a presumption of the relative superiority of the giver. He who prescribes policies exalts himself.

You need not have a record of past performances in order to qualify as a professional adviser.

The down-and-outer, watching the tape, wishes that he could get some word to the Morgan crowd.

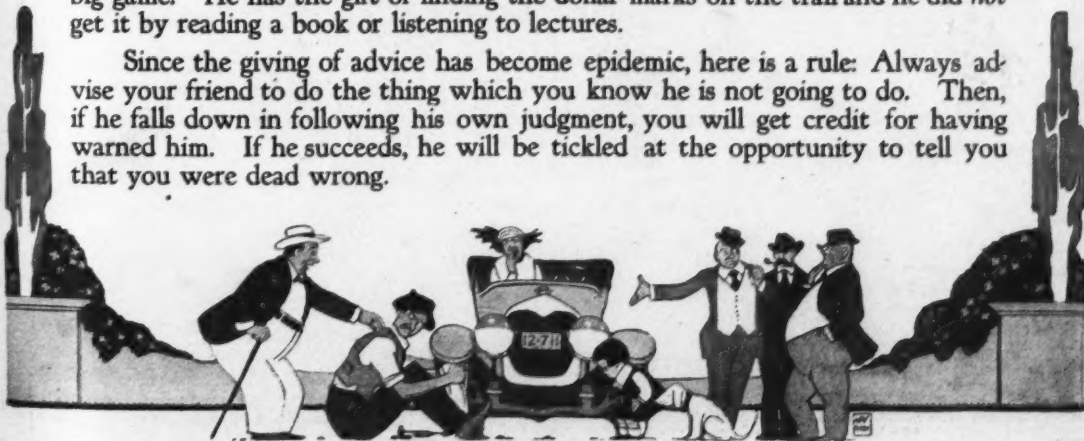
Who writes to the Congressmen and points out the concrete pathway back to general prosperity? The gentleman whose wife takes in washing.

The most plausible rules for the Kings of Big Business are cooked up by a High-Brow who never looked a pay-roll in the face. The pouchy millionaire is asked to give inside information to a covey of squabs. Will he give the gaping young things his real recipe for being successful? The chances are nine to one that he doesn't know it.

The prominent citizen tells them to be sober, frugal, industrious, devoted to the interests of the boss, always giving more service than is demanded, never finding fault, patient in the knowledge that reward will come eventually.

All the inside furnished rooms and pasteboard bungalows are occupied by elderly plodders who have been sober, frugal, industrious, obedient, willing, uncomplaining and patient. They took the whole prescription and did not wake up as millionaires. Conventional advice is good, soft gruel for subordinates, but the lad who wants red meat goes out gunning all by himself and brings in the big game. He has the gift of finding the dollar marks on the trail and he did not get it by reading a book or listening to lectures.

Since the giving of advice has become epidemic, here is a rule: Always advise your friend to do the thing which you know he is not going to do. Then, if he falls down in following his own judgment, you will get credit for having warned him. If he succeeds, he will be tickled at the opportunity to tell you that you were dead wrong.







THE FROSTING DISH

By Edgar A. Guest Decoration by H.C. Pirz

WHEN I was just a little tad
Not more than eight or nine,
One special treat to make me glad
Was set apart as "mine."
On baking days she granted me
The small boy's dearest wish,
And when the cake was finished, she
Gave me the frosting dish.

I've eaten chocolate many ways,
I've had it hot and cold;
I've sampled it throughout my days
In every form it's sold.
And though I still am fond of it,
And hold its flavor sweet,
The icing dish, I still admit,
Remains the greatest treat.

Never has chocolate tasted so,
Nor brought to me such joy
As in those days of long ago
When I was but a boy,
And stood beside my mother fair,
Waiting the time when she
Would gently stoop to kiss me there
And hand the plate to me.

Now there's another in my place
Who stands where once I stood.
And watches with an upturned face
And waits for "something good."
And as she hands him spoon and plate
I chuckle low and wish
That I might be allowed to wait
To scrape the frosting dish.

*A Great
Masterpiece —
and One of
the Most
Impressive
Stories
Published
in Years*

Illustrations by

John Alonzo

Williams

BY that same mausolean instinct that was Artemesia's when she mourned her dear departed in marble and hieroglyphics; by that same architectural gesture of grief which caused Jehan at Agra to erect the Taj Mahal in memory of a dead wife and a cold hearthstone, so the Bon Ton Hotel, even to the pillars with red-freckled monoliths and peacock-backed lobby-chairs, making the analogy rather absurdly complete, reared its fourteen stories of "elegantly furnished suites, all the comforts and none of the discomforts of home."

A mausoleum to the hearth. And as true to form as any that ever mourned the dynastic bones of an Augustus or a Hadrian.

It is doubtful if in all its hothouse garden of women the Hotel Bon Ton boasted a broken finger-nail or that little brash place along the forefinger that tattles so of potato peeling or asparagus scraping.

The fourteenth story, Manicure, Steam-bath, and Beauty Parlors, saw to all that. In spite of long bridge-table, lobby-divan and *table d'hôte* séances, "tea" where the coffee was served with whipped cream and the tarts built in four tiers and mortared in mocha filling, the Bon Ton Hotel was scarcely more than an average of fourteen pounds over-weight.

Forty's silhouette, except for that cruel and irrefutable place where the throat will wattle, was almost interchangeable with eighteen's. Indeed, Bon Ton grandmothers with backs and French heels that were twenty years younger than their throats and bunions, vied with twenty's profile.

Whistler's kind of mother, full of sweet years that were richer because she had dwelt in them, but whose eyelids were a little weary, had no place there.

Mrs. Gronauer, who occupied an outside, southern-exposure suite of five rooms and three baths, jazz-danced on the same cabaret floor with her granddaughters.

Fads for the latest personal accoutrements gripped the Bon Ton in seasonal epidemics.

The permanent wave swept it like a tidal one.

The beaded bag, cunningly contrived, needleful by needleful, from little colored strands of glass caviar, glittered its hour.



Filet lace came then, sheerly, whole yokes of it for *crêpe de Chine* nightgowns and dainty scalloped edges for camisoles.

Mrs. Samstag made six of the nightgowns that winter, three for herself and three for her daughter. Peach-blowy pink ones with lace yokes that were scarcely more to the skin than the print of a wave edge running up sand, and then little frills of pink satin ribbon, caught up here and there with the most delightful and unconvincing little blue satin rosebuds.

It was bad for her neuralgic eye, the meanderings of the *filet* pattern, but she liked the delicate threadiness of the handiwork, and Mr. Latz liked watching her.

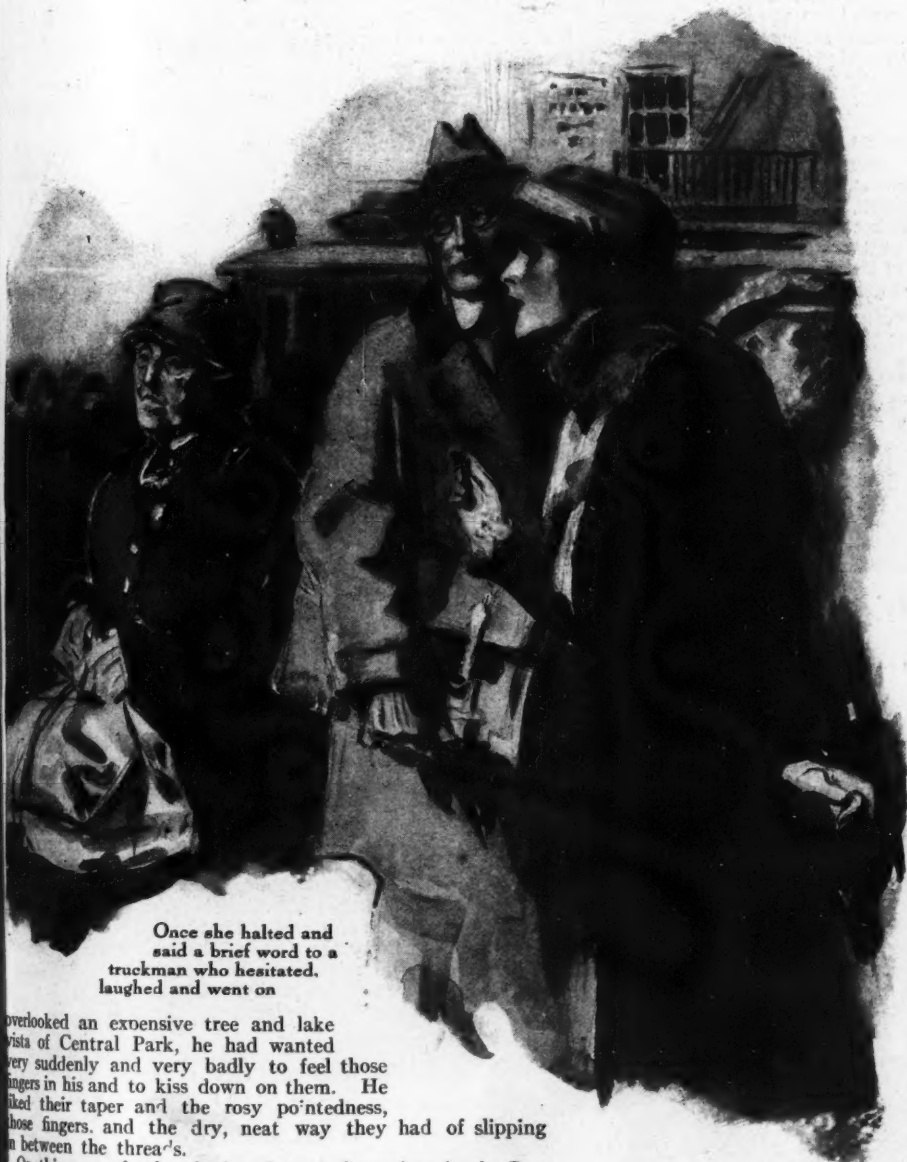
There you have it! Straight through the lacy mesh of the *filet* to the heart interest!

Mr. Louis Latz, who was too short, slightly too stout, and too shy of likely length of swimming arm ever to have figured in any woman's inevitable visualization of her ultimate Leander, liked, fascinatedly, to watch Mrs. Samstag's nicely manicured fingers at work. He liked them passive, too. Best of all, he would have preferred to feel them between his own, but that had never been.

Nevertheless, that desire was capable of catching him un-awares. That very morning as he had stood, in his sumptuous bachelor's apartment, strumming on one of the windows that

She Walks in Beauty

By
Fannie
Hurst



Once she halted and
said a brief word to a
truckman who hesitated.
laughed and went on

shoulder-straps and who could not walk across a hardwood floor without sliding the last three steps, teetered in bare arm-in-arm groups, swapping persiflage with pimply, patent-leather haired young men who were full of nervous excitement and eager to excel in return badinage.

Bell hops scurried with folding tables. Bridge games formed.

The theater group got off, so to speak. Showy women and show-off men. Mrs. Gronauer, in a full length mink coat that enveloped her like a squaw, a titillation of diamond aigrettes in her Titianed hair and an aftermath of

scent as tangible as the trail of a wounded shark, emerged from the elevator with her son and daughter-in-law.

"Foi!" said Mr. Latz, by way of—somewhat unduly perhaps—expressing his own kind of cognizance of the scented trail.

"*Fleur de printemps*," said Mrs. Samstag in quick olfactory analysis. "Eight ninety-eight an ounce." Her nose crawling up to what he thought the cunning perfection of a sniff.

"Used to it from home—not? She is not. Believe me, I knew Max Gronauer when he first started in the produce business in Jersey City and the only perfume he had was seventeen cents a pound, not always fresh killed at that. Cold storage *de printemps*."

"Max Gronauer died just two months after my husband," said Mrs. Samstag, tucking away into her beaded hand-bag her *filet* lace handkerchief, itself guilty of a not inexpensive attire.

"*Thu-thu*," clucked Mr. Latz for want of a fitting retort.

"Heigh-ho! I always say we have so little in common, me and Mrs. Gronauer. She revokes so in bridge, and I think it's terrible for a grandmo:her to blondine so red; but we've both been

overlooked an expensive tree and lake vista of Central Park, he had wanted very suddenly and very badly to feel those fingers in his and to kiss down on them. He liked their taper and the rosy pointedness, those fingers, and the dry, neat way they had of slipping between the threa's.

On this, one of a hundred such typical evenings in the Bon Ton lobby, Mr. Latz, sighing out a satisfaction of his inner man, sat himself down on a red velvet chair opposite Mrs. Samstag. His knees wide-spread, taxed his knife-pressed gray trousers to their very last capacity, but he sat back in none the less evident comfort, building his fingers up into a little chapel.

"Well, how's Mr. Latz this evening?" asked Mrs. Samstag, her smile encompassing the question.

"If I was any better I couldn't stand it"—relishing her smile and his reply.

The Bon Ton had just dined, too well, from fruit-flip à la Bon Ton, mulligatawny soup, *filet* of sole, *sauté*, choice of, or both, *oulette émincé* and spring lamb *grignon* and on through to fresh strawberry ice-cream in fluted paper boxes, *petit fours* and *semi-kasse*. Groups of carefully corseted women stood now beside the invitational plush divans and peacock chairs, paying twenty minutes after-dinner standing penance. Men with Wall Street eyes and blood pressure, slid surreptitious celluloid toothpicks, and gathered around the cigar stand. Orchestra music flickered. Young girls, the traditions of demure sixteen hanging by one inch

widows for almost eight years. Eight years," repeated Mrs. Samstag on a small scented sigh.

He was inordinately sensitive to these allusions, reddening and wanting to seem appropriate.

"Poor, poor little woman!"

"Heigh-ho," she said, and again, "Heigh-ho."

It was about the eyes that Mrs. Samstag showed most plainly whatever inroads into her clay the years might have gained. There were little dark areas beneath them like smeared charcoal and two unrelenting sacs that threatened to become pouchy.

Their effect was not so much one of years, but they gave Mrs. Samstag, in spite of the only slightly plump and really passable figure, the look of one out of health.

What ailed her was hardly organic. She was the victim of periodic and raging neuralgic fires that could sweep the right side of her head and down into her shoulder blade with a great crackling and blazing of nerves. It was not unusual for her daughter Alma to sit up the one or two nights that it could endure, unfailing, through the wee hours, with hot applications.

For a week sometimes, these attacks heralded their comings with little jabs, like the pricks of an exploring needle. Then the under-eyes began to look their muddiest. They were darkening now and she put up two fingers with a little pressing movement to her temple.

"You're a great little woman," reiterated Mr. Latz, rather riveting even Mrs. Samstag's suspicion that here was no great stickler for variety of expression.

"And a great sufferer, too," he said, noting the pressing fingers.

She colored under this delightful impeachment.

"I wouldn't wish one of my neuralgia spells to my worst enemy, Mr. Latz."

"If you were mine—I mean—if—the—say—was mine, I wouldn't stop until I had you to every specialist in Europe. I know a thing or two about those fellows over there. Some of them are wonders."

Mrs. Samstag looked off, her profile inclined to lift and fall as if by little pulleys of emotion.

"That's easier said than done, Mr. Latz, by a—a widow who wants to do right by her grown daughter and living so—high since the war."

"I—I—" said Mr. Latz, leaping impulsively forward on the chair that was as tightly upholstered in effect as he in his modish suit, then clutching himself there as if he had caught the impulse on the fly—"I just wish I could help."

"Oh!" she said, and threw up a swift, brown look from the lace making.

He laughed, but from nervousness.

"My little mother was an ailer too."

"That's me, Mr. Latz. Not sick—just ailing. I always say that it's ridiculous that a woman in such perfect health as I am should be such a sufferer."

"Same with her and her joints."

"Why, I can outdo Alma when it comes to dancing down in the grill with the young people of an evening, or shopping."

"More like sisters than any mother and daughter I ever saw."

"Mother and daughter, but which is which from the back, some of my friends put it," said Mrs. Samstag, not without a curve to her voice, then hastily: "But the best child, Mr. Latz. The best that ever lived. A regular little mother to me in my spells."

"Nice girl, Alma."

"It snowed so the day of—my husband's funeral. Why, do you know that up to then I never had an attack of neuralgia in my life. Didn't even know what a headache was. That long drive. That windy hill-top with two men to keep me from jumping into the grave after him. Ask Alma. That's how I care when I care. But of course, as the saying is, time heals. But that's how I got my first attack. Intensity is what the doctors called it. I'm terribly intense."

"I—guess when a woman like you—cares like—you—cared, it's not much use hoping you would ever—care again. That's about the way of it, ain't it?"

If he had known it, there was something about his own intensity of expression to inspire mirth. His eyebrows lifted to little gothic arches of anxiety, a rash of tiny perspiration broke out over his blue shaved face and as he sat on the edge of his chair, it seemed that inevitably the tight sausage-like knees must push their way through mere fabric.

"That's about the way of it, ain't it?" he said again into the growing silence.

"I—when a woman cares for—a man like—I did—Mr. Latz, she'll never be happy until—she cares again—like that. I always say, once an affectionate nature, always an affectionate nature."

"You mean," he said, leaning forward the imperceptible half-inch that was left of chair, "you mean—me?"

The smell of bay rum came out greenly then as the moisture sprang out on his scalp.

"I—I'm a home woman, Mr. Latz. You can put a fish in water but you cannot make him swim. That's me and hotel life."

At this somewhat cryptic apothegm Mr. Latz's knee touched Mrs. Samstag's, so that he sprang back full of nerves at what he had not intended.

"Marry me, Carrie," he said more abruptly than he might have, without the act of that knee to immediately justify.

She spread the lace out on her lap.

Ostensibly to the hotel lobby, they were casual as, "My mulligatawny soup was cold to-night" or "Have you heard the new one that Al Jolson pulls at the Winter Garden?" But actually, the roar was high in Mrs. Samstag's ears and he could feel the plethoric red rushing in dashes over his body.

"Marry me, Carrie," he said, as if to prove that his stiff lips could repeat their incredible feat.

With a woman's talent for them, her tears sprang.

"Mr. Latz—"

"Louis," he interpolated, widely eloquent of posture.

"You're proposing—Louis!" She explained rather than asked, and placed her hand to her heart so prettily that he wanted to crush it there with his kisses.

"God bless you for knowing it so easy, Carrie. A young girl would make it so

"Alma, be good to mama to-night! Sweetheart—be good to her."



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"You quit butting into me and my wife's affairs, or get out of here," said Louis, without changing his voice or his manner.

hard. It's just what has kept me from asking you weeks ago, this getting it said. Carrie, will you?"

"I'm a widow, Mr. Latz—Louis—"

"Loo—"

"L—Loo. With a grown daughter. Not one of those merry widows you read about."

"That's me! A bachelor on top but a home-man underneath. Why, up to five years ago, Carrie, while the best little mother a man ever had was alive, I never had eyes for a woman or—"

"It's common talk what a grand son you were to her, Mr. La—Louis—"

"Loo!"

"Loo."

"I don't want to seem to brag, Carrie, but you saw the coat that just walked out on Mrs. Gronauer? My little mother, she was a humpback, Carrie, not a real one, but all stooped from the heavy years when she was helping my father to get his start. Well, anyway, that little stooped back was one of the reasons why I was so anxious to make it up to her. Y'understand?"

"Yes—Loo."

"But you saw that mink coat? Well, my little mother, three

years before she died, was wearing one like that in sable. Real Russian. Set me back eighteen thousand, wholesale, and she never knew different than that it cost eighteen hundred. Proudest moment of my life when I helped my little old mother into her own automobile in that sable coat."

"I had some friends lived in the Grenoble apartments when you did—the Adelbergs. They used to tell me how it hung right down to her heels and she never got into the auto that she didn't pick it up so as not to sit on it."

"That there coat is packed away in cold storage, now, Carrie, waiting, without me exactly knowing why, I guess, for—the one little woman in the world besides her I would let so much as touch its hem."

Mrs. Samstag's lips parted, her teeth showing through like light.

"Oh," she said, "sable. That's my fur, Loo. I've never owned any, but ask Alma if I don't stop to look at it in every show window. Sable!"

"Carrie—would you—could you—I'm not what you would call a youngster in years, I guess, but forty-four ain't—"

"I'm—forty-one, Louis. A man like you could have younger."

"No. That's what I don't want. In my lonesomeness, after my mother's death, I thought once that maybe a young girl from the West, nice girl with her mother from Ohio—but I—funny thing, now I come to think about it—I never once mentioned my little mother's sable coat to her. I couldn't have satisfied a young girl like that or her me, Carrie, any more than I could satisfy Alma. It was one of those mama-madematches that we got into because we couldn't help it and out of it before it was too late. No, no, Carrie, what I want is a woman near to my own age."

"Loo, I—I couldn't start in with you even with the one little lie that gives every woman a right to be a liar. I'm forty-three, Louis—nearer to forty-four. You're not mad, Loo?"

"God love it! If that ain't a little woman for you! Mad? Just doing that little thing with me raises your stock fifty per cent."

"I'm—that way."

"We're a lot alike, Carrie. At heart, I'm a home man, Carrie, and unless I'm pretty much off my guess, you are, too—I mean a home woman. Right?"

"Me all over, Loo. Ask Alma if—"

"I've got the means, too, Carrie, to give a woman a home to be proud of."

"Just for fun, ask Alma, Loo, if one year since her father's death I haven't said, Alma, I wish I had the heart to go back housekeeping."

"I knew it!"

"But I ask you, Louis, what's been the incentive? Without a man in the house I wouldn't have the same interest. That first winter after my husband died I didn't even have the heart to take the summer-covers off the furniture. You can believe me or not, but half the time with just me to eat it, I wouldn't bother with more than a cold snack for supper and everyone knew what a table we used to set. But with no one to come home evenings expecting a hot meal—"

"You poor little woman. I know how it is. Why, if I used to so much as telephone that I couldn't get home for supper right away I knew my little mother would turn out the gas under what was cooking and not eat enough herself to keep a bird alive."

"Housekeeping is no life for a woman alone. On the other hand, Mr. Latz—Louis—Loo, on my income, and with a daughter growing up, and naturally anxious to give her the best, it hasn't been so easy. People think I'm a rich widow and with her father's memory to consider and a young lady daughter, naturally I let them think it, but on my seventy-four hundred a year



"That there sable coat is packed away in cold storage now, Carrie," Louis said, "waiting."

it has been hard to keep up appearances in a hotel like this. Not that I think you think I'm a rich widow, but just the same, that's me every time. Right out with the truth from the start."

"It shows you're a clever little manager to be able to do it."

"We lived big and spent big while my husband lived. He was as shrewd a jobber in knit underwear as the business ever saw, but—well, you know how it is. Pneumonia. I always say he wore himself out with conscientiousness."

"Maybe you don't believe it, Carrie, but it makes me happy what you just said about money. It means I can give you things you couldn't afford for yourself. I don't say this for publication, Carrie, but in Wall Street alone, outside of my brokerage business, I cleared eighty-six thousand last year. I can give you the best. You deserve it, Carrie. Will you say yes?"

"My daughter, Loo. She's only eighteen, but she's my shadow—I lean on her so."

"A sweet, dutiful girl like Alma would be the last to stand in her mother's light."

"She's my only. We're different natured. Alma's a Samstag through and through, quiet, reserved. But she's my all, Louis. I love my baby too much to—to marry where she wouldn't be as welcome as the day itself. She's precious to me, Louis."



I guess, for the one little woman in the world I would let so much as touch its hem."

"Why, of course. You wouldn't be you if she wasn't. You think I would want you to feel different?"

"I mean—Louis—no matter where I go, more than with most children, she's part of me, Loo. I—why that child won't so much as go to spend the night with a girl friend away from me. Her quiet ways don't show it, but Alma has character! You wouldn't believe it, Louis, how she takes care of me."

"Why, Carrie, the first thing we pick out in our new home will be a room for her."

"Loo!"

"Not that she will want it long the way I see that young rascal Friedlander sits up to her. A better young fellow and a better business head you couldn't pick for her. Didn't that youngster go out to Dayton the other day and land a contract for the surgical fittings for a big new hospital out there before the local firms even rubbed the sleep out of their eyes? I have it from good authority, Friedlander & Sons doubled their excess-profits tax last year."

A white flash of something that was almost fear seemed to strike Mrs. Samstag into a rigid pallor.

"No! No! I'm not like most mothers, Louis, for marrying their daughters off. I want her with me. If marrying her off is your idea, it's best you know it now in the beginning. I want my

little girl with me—I have to have my little girl with me!"

He was so deeply moved that his eyes were moist.

"Why, Carrie, every time you open your mouth, you only prove to me further what a grand little woman you are."

"You'll like Alma, when you get to know her, Louis."

"Why, I do now. Always have said she's a sweet little thing."

"She is quiet and hard to get acquainted with at first, but that is reserve. She's not forward like most young girls nowadays. She's the kind of a child that would rather sit upstairs evenings with a book or her sewing than here in the lobby. She's there now."

"Give me that kind every time, in preference to all these gay young chickens that know more they oughtn't to know about life before they start than my little mother did when she finished."

"But do you think that girl will go to bed before I come up? Not a bit of it. She's been my comforter and my salvation in my troubles. More like the mother, I sometimes tell her, and me the child. If you want me, Louis, it's got to be with her too. I couldn't give up my baby—not my baby."

"Why, Carrie, have your baby to your heart's content. She's got to be a fine girl to have you for a mother and now it will be my duty to please her as a father. Carrie, will you have me?"

"Oh, Louis—Loo!"

"Carrie, my dear!"

And so it was that Carrie Samstag and Louis Latz came into their betrothal.

None the less, it was with some misgivings and red lights burning high on her cheek-bones that Mrs. Samstag, at just after ten that evening, turned the knob of the door that entered into her little sitting-room, but in this case, a room redeemed by an upright piano with a green silk and gold-lace shaded floor lamp glowing by it. Two gilt framed photographs and a cluster of ivory knickknacks on the white mantel. A heap of hand-made cushions. Art editions of the gift-poets and some circulating library novels. A fireside chair, privately owned and drawn up, ironically enough, beside the gilded radiator, its head rest worn from kindly service to Mrs. Samstag's neuralgic brow.

From the nest of cushions in the circle of lamp glow, Alma sprang up at her mother's entrance. Sure enough, she had been reading and her cheek was a little flushed and crumpled from where it had been resting in the palm of her hand.

"Mama," she said, coming out of the circle of light and switching on the ceiling bulbs, "you stayed down so late."

There was a slow prettiness to Alma. It came upon you like a little dawn, palely at first and then pinkening to a pleasant consciousness that her small face was heart-shaped and clear as an almond, that the pupils of her gray eyes were deep and dark like cisterns and to young Leo Friedlander, rather apt his comparison, too, her mouth was exactly the shape of a small bow that had shot its quiverful of arrows into his heart.

And instead of her eighteen she looked sixteen. There was that kind of timid adolescence about her, yet when she said, "Mama, you stayed down so late," the bang of a little pistol-shot was back somewhere in her voice.

"Why—Mr. Latz—and I—sat and talked."

An almost imperceptible nerve was dancing against Mrs. Samstag's right temple. Alma could sense, rather than see the ridge of pain.

"You're all right, mama?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Samstag, and plumped rather than sat herself down on a divan, its naked greenness relieved by a thrown scarf of black velvet, stenciled in gold.

"You shouldn't have remained down so long if your head is hurting," said her daughter, and quite casually took up her mother's beaded hand-bag where it had fallen in her lap, but her fingers feeling lightly and furtively as if for the shape of its contents.

"Stop that," said Mrs. Samstag, jerking it back, a dull anger in her voice.

"Come to bed, mama. If you're in for neuralgia, I'll fix the electric pad."

Suddenly Mrs. Samstag shot out her arm, rather slim looking in the invariable long sleeve she affected, drawing Alma back toward her by the ribbon sash of her pretty chiffon frock.

"Alma, be good to mama tonight! Sweetheart—be good to her."

The quick suspecting fear that had motivated Miss Samstag's groping along the beaded hand-bag shot out again in her manner.

"Mama—you haven't?"

"No, no. Don't nag me. It's something else, Alma. Something mama is very happy about."

"Mama, you've broken your promise again."

"No. No. No. Alma, I've been a good mother to you, haven't I?"

"Yes, mama, yes, but what—"

"Whatever else I've been hasn't been my fault—you've always blamed Heyman."

"Mama, I don't understand."

"I've caused you worry, Alma—terrible worry. But everything is changed now. Mama's going to turn over a new leaf that everything is going to be happiness in this family."

"Dearest, if you knew how happy it makes me to hear you say that."

"Alma, look at me."

"Mama, you—you frighten me."

"You like Louis Latz, don't you, Alma?"

"Why yes, mama. Very much."

"We can't all be young and handsome like Leo, can we?"

"You mean—"

"I mean that finer and better men than Louis Latz aren't lying around loose. A man who treated his mother like a queen and who worked himself up from selling newspapers on the street to a millionaire."

"Mama?"

"Yes, baby. He asked me tonight. Come to me, Alma, stay with me close. He asked me tonight."

"What?"

"You know. Haven't you seen it coming for weeks? I have."

"Seen what?"

"Don't make mama come out and say it. For eight years I've been as grieving a widow to a man as a woman could be. But I'm human, Alma, and he—asked me to-night."

There was a curious pallor came over Miss Samstag's face, as if smeared there by a hand.

"Asked you what?"

"Alma, it don't mean I'm not true to your father as I was the day I buried him in that blizzard back there, but could you ask for a finer, steadier man than Louis Latz? It looks out of his face."

"Mama, you—what—are you saying?"

"Alma?"

There lay a silence between them that took on the roar of a

simoon and Miss Samstag jumped then from her mother's embrace, her little face stiff with the clench of her mouth.

"Mama—you—no—no. Oh, mama— Oh—"

A quick spout of hysteria seemed to half strangle Mrs. Samstag, so that she slanted backward, holding her throat.

"I knew it. My own child against me. Oh, God! Why was I born? My own child against me!"

"Mama—you can't marry him. You can't marry—anybody."

"Why can't I marry anybody? Must I be afraid to tell my own child when a good man wants to marry me and give us both a good home? That's my thanks for making my child my first consideration—before I accepted him."

"Mama, you didn't accept him. Darling, you wouldn't do a—thing like that!"

Miss Samstag's voice thickened up then, quite frantically, into a little scream that knotted in her throat and she was suddenly so small and stricken, that with a gasp for fear she might crumple up where she stood, Mrs. Samstag leaned forward, catching her again by the sash.

"Alma!"

It was only for an instant, however. Suddenly Miss Samstag was her coolly firm little self, the bang of authority back in her voice.

"You can't marry Louis Latz."

"Can't I? Watch me."

"You can't do that to a nice, deserving fellow like him!"

"Do what?"

"That!"

Then Mrs. Samstag threw up both her hands to her face, rocking in an agony of self-abandon that was rather horrid to behold.

"Oh, God, why don't you put me out of it all? My misery! I'm a leper to my own child!"

"Oh—mama—"

"Yes, a leper. Hold my misfortune against me. Let my neuralgia and Doctor Heyman's prescription to cure it ruin my life. Rob me of what happiness with a good man there is left in it for me. I don't want happiness. Don't expect it. I'm here just to suffer. My daughter will see to that. Oh, I know what is on your mind. You want to make me out something—terrible—because Dr. Heyman once taught me how to help myself a little when I'm nearly wild with neuralgia. Those were doctor's orders. I'll kill myself before I let you make me out something terrible. I never even knew what it was before the doctor gave his prescription. I'll kill—you hear—kill myself."

She was hoarse, she was tear splotted so that her lips were slippery with them, and while the ague of her passion shook her, Alma, her own face swept white and her voice guttered with restraint, took her mother into the cradle of her arms, and rocked and hushed her there.

"Mama, mama, what are you saying? I'm not blaming you, sweetheart. I blame him—Dr. Heyman—for prescribing it in the beginning. I know your fight. How brave it is. Even when I'm cross with you, I realize. Alma's fighting with you, dearest, every inch of the way until—you're cured! And then—maybe—some day—anything you want! But not now. Mama, you wouldn't marry Louis Latz now!"

"I would. He's my cure. A good home with a good man and money enough to travel and forget myself. Alma, mama knows she's not an angel—sometimes when she thinks what she's put her little girl through this last year, she just wants to go out on the hill-top where she caught the neuralgia and lay down beside that grave out there and—"

"Mama, don't talk like that!"

"But now's my chance, Alma, to get well. I've too much worry in this big hotel trying to keep up big expenses on little money and—"

"I know it, mama. That's why I'm so in favor of finding ourselves a sweet, tiny little apartment with kitch—"

"No! Your father died with the world thinking him a rich man and it will never find out from me that he wasn't. I won't be the one to humiliate his memory—a man who enjoyed keeping up appearances the way he did. Oh, Alma, Alma, I'm going to get well now. I promise. So help me God, if I ever give in to—to it again."

"Mama, please. For God's sake, you've said the same thing so often only to break your promise."

"I've been weak, Alma; I don't deny it. But nobody who hasn't been tortured as I have, can realize what it means to get relief just by—"

"Mama, you're not playing fair this (Continued on page 153)"

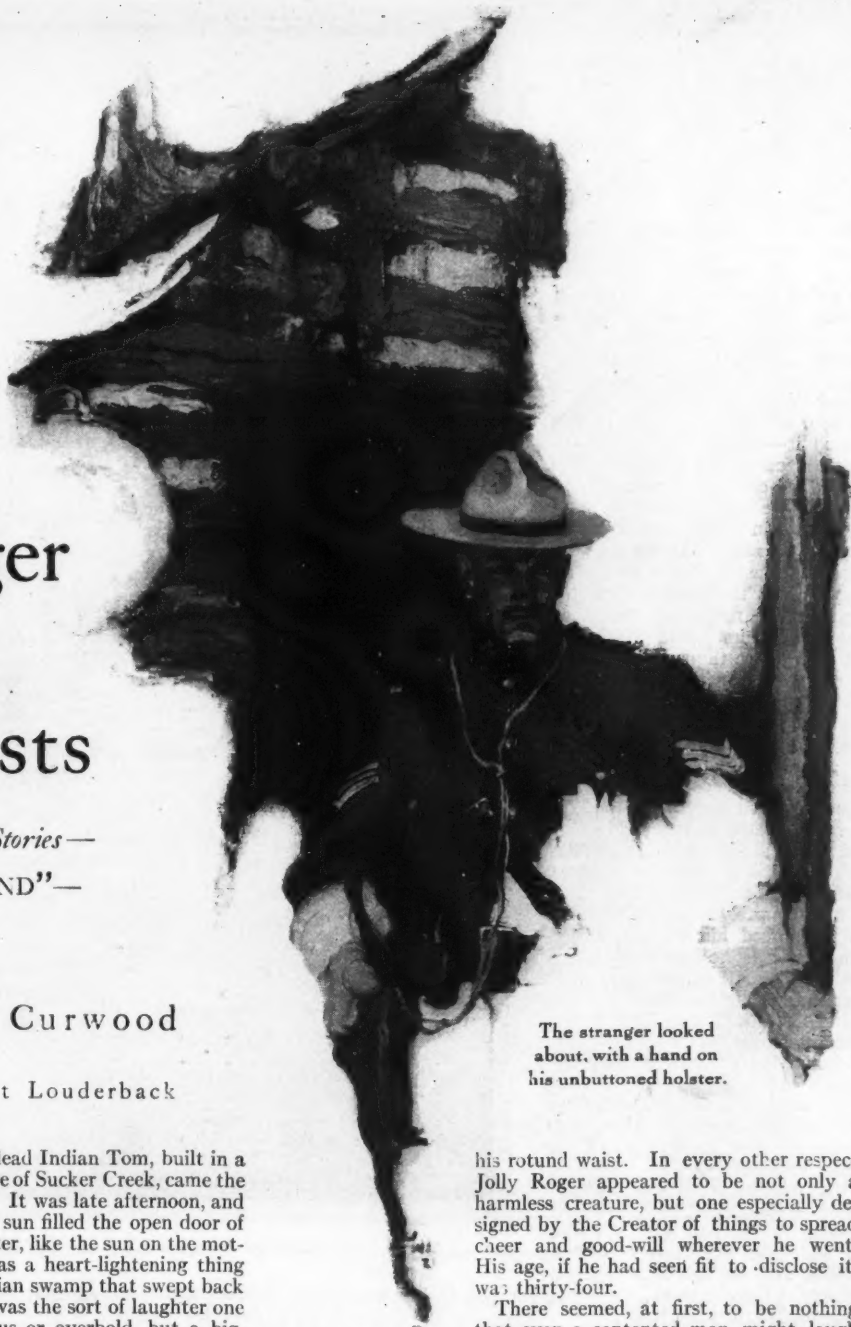
"She's only a kid," he argued. "And I'm an outlaw and sooner or later they'll get me. What right have I to love her?"

Jolly Roger of the Forests

One of a Great Series of Stories—
"THE COUNTRY BEYOND"—

By
James Oliver Curwood

Illustrations by Walt Louderback



The stranger looked about, with a hand on his unbuttoned holster.

FROM the little old cabin of dead Indian Tom, built in a grassy glade close to the shore of Sucker Creek, came the sound of a man's laughter. It was late afternoon, and the last flooding gold of the sun filled the open door of the poplar shack. The man's laughter, like the sun on the mottled tapestry of the poplar-wood, was a heart-lightening thing there on the edge of the great Canadian swamp that swept back for miles to the north and west. It was the sort of laughter one seldom hears from a man, not riotous or overbold, but a big, clean laughter that came from the soul.

In the shack, this last day of May afternoon, stood leaning over a rough table the man of the laugh—Roger McKay, known as Jolly Roger, outlaw extraordinary, and sought by the men of every Royal Northwest Mounted Police patrol north of the Height of Land.

It was incongruous and inconceivable to think of him as an outlaw, as he stood there in the last glow of the sun—an outlaw with the weirdest and strangest record in all the northland hung up against his name. He was not tall, and neither was he short, and he was as plump as an apple and as rosy as its ripest side. There was something cherubic in the smoothness and the fulness of his face, the clear gray of his eyes, the fine-spun blond of his short-cropped hair, and the plumpness of his hands and half-bared arms. He was a priestly, well-fed looking man, was this Jolly Roger, rotund and convivial in all his proportions, and some in great error would have called him fat. But it was a strange kind of fatness, as many a man on the trail could swear to. And as for sin, or one sign of outlawry, it could not be found in any mark upon him—unless one closed his eyes to all else and guessed it by the belt and revolver holster which he wore about

his rotund waist. In every other respect Jolly Roger appeared to be not only a harmless creature, but one especially designed by the Creator of things to spread cheer and good-will wherever he went. His age, if he had seen fit to disclose it, was thirty-four.

There seemed, at first, to be nothing that even a contented man might laugh at in the cabin, and even less to bring merriment from one on whose head a price was set—unless it was the delicious aroma of a supper just about ready to be served. On a little stove in the farthest corner of the shack the breasts of two spruce partridges were turning golden brown in a skillet, and from the broken neck of a coffee-pot a rich perfume was rising with the steam. Piping hot in the open oven half a dozen baked potatoes were waiting in their crisp brown jackets.

From the table Jolly Roger turned, rubbing his hands and chuckling as he went for a third time to a low shelf built against the cabin wall. There he carefully raised a mass of old papers from a box, and at the movement there came a protesting squeak, and a little brown mouse popped up to the edge of it and peered at him with a pair of bright little questioning eyes.

"You little devil!" he exulted. "You nerry little devil!"

He raised the papers higher, and again looked upon his discovery of half an hour ago. In a soft nest lay four tiny mice, still naked and blind, and as he lowered the mass of papers the mother burrowed back to them, and he could hear her squeaking and chirruping to the little ones, as if she was trying to tell them not to be afraid of this man, for she knew him very well, and it

wasn't in his mind to hurt them. And Jolly Roger, as he returned to the setting of his table, laughed again—and the laugh rolled out into the golden sunset, and from the top of a spruce at the edge of the creek a big blue jay answered it in a riotous challenge.

But at the bottom of that laugh, if one could have looked a bit deeper, was something more than the naked little mice in the nest of torn-up paper. To-day happiness had strangely come this gay-hearted freebooter's way, and he might have reached out and seized it, and kept it for his own. But in the hour of his opportunity he had refused it—because he was an outlaw—because strong within him was a peculiar code of honor all his own. There was nothing of man-made religion in the soul of Roger McKay. Nature was his god; its manifestations, its life, and the air it gave him to breathe were the pages which made up the Book that guided him. And within the last hour, since the sun had begun to drop behind the tips of the tallest trees, these things had told him that he was a fool for turning away from the one great thing in all life—simply because his own humors of existence had made him an outcast and hunted by the laws of men. So the change had come, and for a space his soul was filled with the thrill of song and laughter.

Half an hour ago he believed that he had definitely made up his mind. He had forced himself into forgetfulness of laws he had broken, and the scarlet-coated men who were ever on the watch for his trail. They would never seek him here, in the wilderness country close to the edge of civilization, and time, he had told himself in that moment of optimism, would blot out both his identity and his danger. To-morrow he would go over to Cragg's Ridge again, and then—

His mind was crowded with a vision of blue eyes, of brown curls glowing in the pale sun, of a wistful, wide-eyed little face turned up to him, and red lips that said falteringly, "I don't think it's wrong for you to kiss me—if you want to, Mister Jolly Roger!"

Boldly he had talked about it to the bright-eyed little mother mouse who peered at him now and then over the edge of her box.

"You're a little devil of iniquity yourself," he told her. "You're a regular Mrs. Captain Kidd, and you've eaten my cheese, and chawed my snow-shoe laces, and robbed me of a sock to make your nest. I ought to catch you in a trap, or blow your head off. But I don't. I let you live—and have a fam'ly. And it's you who have given me the Big Idea, Mrs. Captain Kidd. You sure have! You've told me I've got a right to have a nest of my own, and I'm going to have it—an' in that nest is going to be the sweetest, prettiest little angel that God Almighty ever forgot to make into a flower! Yessir. And if the law comes—"

And then, suddenly, the vision would cloud, and there would come into Jolly Roger's face the look of a man who knew—when he stood the truth out naked—that he was facing a world with his back to the wall.

And now, as the sun went down, and his supper waited, that cloud which came to blot out his picture grew deeper and more sinister, and the chill of it entered his heart. He turned from his table to the open door, and his fingers drew themselves



"Cassidy. I oughta kill you. You don't give me any peace. But I'm too

slowly into clenched fists, and he looked out quietly and steadily into his world.

And then that something which was bigger than desire came up within him, and forced itself in words between his grimly set lips.

"She's only a—kid," he said, a fierce, low note of defiance in his voice. "And I—I'm a hunted pirate, and there's jails waiting for me, and they'll get me sooner or later, sure as God lets me live!"

He turned from the sun to his shadowing cabin, and for a moment a ghost of a smile played in his face as he heard the little mother-mouse rustling among her papers.

"We can't do it," he said. "We simply can't do it, Mrs. Captain Kidd. She's had hell enough without me taking her into another. And it'd be that, sooner or later. It sure would, Mrs. Captain Kidd. But I'm glad, mighty glad, to think she'd let me kiss her—if I wanted to. Think of that, Mrs. Captain Kidd!—if I wanted to. Oh, Lord!"

And the humor of it crept in alongside the tragedy in Jolly Roger's heart, and he chuckled as he bent over his partridge-breasts.

"If I wanted to!" he repeated. "Why, if I had a life to give, I'd give it—to kiss her just once! But, as it happens, Mrs. Captain Kidd—"



chicken-hearted. Besides, I like you. But you lack finesse." And Jolly Roger's chuckle broke into another laugh.

Jolly Roger's breath cut itself suddenly short, and for an instant he grew tense as he bent over the stove. His philosophy had taught him one thing above all others, that he was a survival of the fittest—only so long as he survived. And he was always guarding against the end. His brain was keen, his ears quick, and every fiber in him trained to its duty of watchfulness. And he knew, without turning his head, that some one was standing in the doorway behind him. There had come a faint noise, a shadowing of the fading sun-glow on the wall, the electrical disturbance of another presence, gazing at him quietly, without motion and without sound. After that first telegraphic shock of warning he stabbed his fork into a partridge-breast, flopped it over, chuckled loudly—and then with a lightning movement was facing the door, his forty-four Colt leveled waist-high at the intruder.

Almost in the same movement his gun-arm dropped limply to his side.

"Well, I'll be——"

He stared. And the face in the doorway stared back at him.

"Nada!" he gasped. "Good Lord, I thought—I thought——"

He swallowed as he tried to lie. "I thought—it might be a bear!"

He did not, at first, see that the slim, calico-dressed little figure of Jed Hawkins' foster-girl was almost drippingly wet. Her blue eyes were shining at him, wide and startled. Her cheeks

were flushed. A strange look had frozen on her parted red lips, and her hair was falling loose in a cloud of curling brown tresses about her shoulders. Jolly Roger, dreaming of her in his insane happiness of a few minutes ago, sensed nothing beyond the beauty and the unexpectedness of her in this first moment. Then—swiftly—he saw the other thing. The last glow of the sun glistened in her wet hair, her dress was sodden and clinging, and little pools of water were widening slowly about her ragged shoes. These things he might have expected, for she had to cross the creek. But it was the look in her eyes that startled him, as she stood there with Peter, the mongrel pup, clasped tightly in her arms.

"Nada, what's happened?" he asked, laying his gun on the table. "You fell in the creek——"

"It—it's Peter," she cried, with a sobbing break in her voice. "We come on Jed Hawkins when he was diggin' up some of his whisky, and he was mad, and pulled my hair, and Peter bit him—and then he picked up Peter and threw him against a rock—and he's terribly hurt! Oh, Mister Jolly Roger——"

She held out the pup to him, and Peter whimpered as Jolly Roger took his wiry little face between his hands, and then lifted him gently. The girl was sobbing, with passionate little catches in her breath, but there were no tears in her eyes as they turned for an instant from Peter to the gun on the table.

Jolly Roger of the Forests

"If I'd had that," she cried, "I'd hev killed him!"

Jolly Roger's face was coldly gray as he knelt down on the floor and bent over Peter.

"He—pulled your hair, you say?"

"I—forgot," she whispered, close at his shoulder. "I wasn't goin' to tell you that. But it didn't hurt. It was Peter——"

He felt the damp caress of her curls upon his neck as she bent over him.

"Please tell me, Mister Jolly Roger—is he hurt—bad?"

With the tenderness of a woman Jolly Roger worked his fingers over Peter's scrawny little body. And Peter, whimpering softly, felt the infinite consolation of their touch. He was no longer afraid of Jed Hawkins, or of pain, or of death. The soul of a dog is simple in its measurement of blessings, and to Peter it was a great happiness to lie here, broken and in pain, with the face of his beloved mistress over him and Jolly Roger's hands working to mend his hurt. He whimpered when Jolly Roger found the broken place, and he cried out like a little child when there came the sudden, quick snapping of a bone—but even then he turned his head so that he could thrust out his hot tongue against the back of his man-friend's hand. And Jolly Roger, as he worked, was giving instructions to the girl, who was quick as a bird to bring him cloth which she tore into bandages, so that at the end of ten minutes Peter's right hind leg was trussed up so tightly that it was as stiff and as useless as a piece of wood.

"His hip was dislocated and his leg-bone broken," said Jolly Roger when he had finished. "He is all right now, and inside of three weeks will be on his feet again."

He lifted Peter gently, and made him a nest among the blankets in his bunk. And then, still with that strange, gray look in his face, he turned to Nada.

She was standing partly facing the door, her eyes straight on him. And Jolly Roger saw in them that wonderful something which had given his storm-beaten soul a glimpse of paradise earlier that day.

"I knew you'd fix him, Mister—Roger," she whispered, a great pride and faith and worship in the low thrill of her voice. "I knew it!"

Something choked Jolly Roger, and he turned to the stove and began spearing the crisp brown potatoes on the end of a fork. And he said, with his back toward her,

"You came just in time for supper, Nada. We'll eat—and then I'll go home with you, as far as the Ridge."

Peter watched them. His pain was gone, and it was nice and comfortable in Jolly Roger's blanket, and with his whiskered face on his fore-paws his bright eyes followed every movement of these two who so completely made up his world. He heard that sweet little laugh which came only now and then from Nada's lips, when for a moment she was happy; he saw her shake out her wonderful hair in the glow of the lamp which Jolly Roger lighted, and he observed Jolly Roger standing at the stove—looking at her as she did it—a worship in his face which changed the instant her eyes turned toward him. In Peter's active little brain this gave birth to nothing of definite understanding, except that in it all he sensed happiness, for—somehow—there was always that feeling when they were with Jolly Roger, no matter whether the sun was shining or the day was dark and filled with gloom. Many times in his short life he had seen grief and tears in Nada's face, and had seen her cringe and hide herself at the vile cursing and witch-like voice of the man and woman back in the other cabin. But there was nothing like that in Jolly Roger's company. He had two eyes, and he was not always cursing, and he did not pull Nada's hair—and Peter loved him from the bottom of his soul. And he knew that his mistress loved him, for she had told him so, and there was always a different look in her eyes when she was with Jolly Roger, and it was only then that she laughed in that glad little way—as she was laughing now.

Jolly Roger was seated at the table, and Nada stood behind him, her face flushed joyously at the wonderful privilege of pouring his coffee. And then she sat down, and Jolly Roger gave her the nicest of the partridge-breasts, and tried hard to keep his eyes calm and quiet as he looked at the adorable sweetness of her across the table from him. To Nada there was nothing of shame in what lay behind the happiness in the violet radiance of her eyes. Jolly Roger had brought to her the only happiness that had ever come into her life. Next to her God, which Jed Hawkins and his witch-woman had not destroyed within her, she thought of this stranger who for three months had been hiding in Indian Tom's cabin. And, like Peter, she loved him. The innocence of it lay naked in her eyes.

"Nada," said Jolly Roger, "You're seventeen——"

"Goin' on eighteen," she corrected quickly. "I was seventeen two weeks ago!"

The quick, undefined little note of eagerness in her voice made his heart thump. He nodded, and smiled.

"Yes, going on eighteen," he said, "And pretty soon some young fellow will come along, and see you, and marry you——"

"O-o-o-h-h-h!"

It was a little, strange cry that came to her lips, and Jolly Roger saw a quick throbbing in her bare throat, and her eyes were so wide-open and startled as she looked at him that he felt, for a moment, as if the resolution in his soul was giving way.

"Where are you goin', Mister Roger?"

"Me? Oh, I'm not going anywhere—not for a time, at least. But you—you'll surely be going away with some one—some day."

"I won't," she denied hotly. "I hate men! I hate all but you, Mister Jolly Roger. And if you go away——"

"Yes, if I go away——"

"I'll kill Jed Hawkins!"

Involuntarily she reached out a slim hand to the big gun on the corner of the table.

"I'll kill 'im, if you go away," she threatened again. "He's broken his wife, and crippled her, and if it wasn't for her I'd have gone long ago. But I've promised, and I'm goin' to stay—until something happens. And if you go—now——"

At the choking sob in her throat and the sudden quiver that came to her lips, Jolly Roger jumped up for the coffee-pot, though his cup was still half full.

"I won't go, Nada," he cried, trying to laugh. "I promise—cross my heart and hope to die! I won't go—until you tell me I can."

And then, feeling that something had almost gone wrong for a moment, Peter yipped from his nest in the bunk, and the gladness in Nada's eyes thanked Jolly Roger for his promise when he came back with the coffee-pot. Standing behind her, he made pretense of refilling her cup, though she had scarcely touched it, and all the time his eyes were looking at her beautiful head, and he saw again the dampness in her hair.

"What happened in the creek, Nada?" he asked.

She told him, and at the mention of his name Peter drew his bristling little head erect, and waited expectantly. He could see Jolly Roger's face, now staring and a bit shocked, and then with a quick smile flashing over it; and when Nada had finished, Jolly Roger leaned a little toward her in the lamp-glow, and said:

"You've got to promise me something, Nada. If Jed Hawkins ever hits you again, or pulls your hair, or even threatens to do it—will you tell me?"

Nada hesitated.

"If you don't—I'll take back my promise, and won't stay," he added.

"Then—I'll promise," she said. "If he does it, I'll tell you. But I ain't—I mean I am not afraid, except for Peter. Jed Hawkins will sure kill him if I take him back, Mister Roger. Will you keep him here? And—o-o-o-h!—if I could only stay, too——"

The words came from her in a frightened breath, and in an instant a flood of color rushed like fire into her cheeks. But Jolly Roger turned again to the stove, and made as if he had not seen the blush or heard her last words, so that the shame of her embarrassment was gone as quickly as it had come.

"Yes, I'll keep Peter," he said over his shoulder. And in his heart another voice which she could not hear, was crying, "And I'd give my life if I could keep you!"

Devouring his bits of partridge-breast, Peter watched Jolly Roger and Nada out of the corner of his eye as they left the cabin half an hour later. It was dark when they went, and Jolly Roger closed only the mosquito-screen, leaving the door wide open, and Peter could hear their footsteps disappearing slowly into the deep gloom of the forest. It was a little before moon-rise, and under the spruce and cedar and thick balsam the world was like a black pit. It was very still, and except for the soft tread of their own feet and the musical ripple of water in the creek there was scarcely a sound in this first hour of the night. In Jolly Roger there rose something of exultation, for Nada's warm little hand lay in his as he guided her through the darkness, and her fingers had clasped themselves tightly round his thumb. She was very close to him when he paused to make sure of the unseen trail, so close that her cheek rested against his arm, and—bending a little—his lips touched the soft ripples of her hair. But he could not see her in the gloom, and his heart pounded fiercely all the way to the ford.

Then he laughed a strange little laugh that was not at all like Jolly Roger.

"I'll try and not let you get wet again, Nada," he said.

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"I don't think it's wrong for you to kiss me—if you want to, Mister Jolly Roger!"

Her fingers still held to his thumb, as if she was afraid of losing him there in the blackness that lay about them like a great ink-blot. And she crept closer to him, saying nothing, and all the power in his soul fought in Jolly Roger to keep him from putting his arms about her slim little body and crying out the worship that was in him.

"I ain't—I mean I'm not afraid of gettin' wet," he heard her whisper then. "You're so big and strong, Mister Roger—"

Gently he freed his thumb from her fingers, and picked her up, and held her high, so that she was against his breast and above the deepest of the water. Lightly at first Nada's arms lay about his shoulders, but as the flood began to rush higher and she felt him straining against it, her arms tightened, until the clasp of them was warm and thrilling round Jolly Roger's neck, and a mass of her sweet curls fell about his face. She gave a big gasp of

relief when he stood her safely down upon her feet on the other side. And then again she reached out, and found his hand, and twined her fingers about his big thumb—and Jolly Roger went on with her over the plain toward Cragg's Ridge, dripping wet, just as the rim of the moon began to rise over the edge of the eastern forests.

It seemed an interminable wait to Peter, back in the cabin. Jolly Roger had put out the light, and when the moon came up the glow of it did not come into the dark room where Peter lay, for the open door was to the west, and curtains were drawn closely at both windows. But through the door he could see the first mellowing of the night, and after that the swift coming of a soft, golden radiance which swallowed all darkness and filled his world with the ghostly shadows which seemed alive, yet never made a sound.

Jolly Roger of the Forests

In the gloom of the cabin his eyes remained fixed steadily upon the open door, and for a long time he listened only for the returning footsteps of Jolly Roger and Nada. Twice he made efforts to drag himself to the edge of the bunk, but the movement sent such a cutting pain through him that he did not make a third. And outside, after a time, he heard the Night People rousing themselves. They were very cautious, these Night People, for unlike the creatures of the dawn, waking to greet the sun with song and happiness, most of them were sharp-fanged and long-clawed—rovers and pirates of the great wilderness, ready to kill. And this, too, Peter sensed through the generations of northland dog that was in him. He heard a wolf howl, coming faintly through the night from miles away, and something told him it was not a dog. From nearer came the call of a moose, and that same sense told him he had heard a monster bear which his eyes had never seen. He did not know of the soft-footed, night-eyed creatures of prey—the fox, the lynx, the fisher-cat, the mink and the ermine, nor of the round-eyed, feathered murderers in the tree-tops—yet that same something told him they were out there among the shadows, under the luring glow of the moon.

At last, there was an end to his wait. He heard footsteps, and Jolly Roger came from out of the yellow moon-mist of the night and stopped in front of the door. There he stood, making no sound, and looking into the west, where the sky was ablaze with stars over the tree-tops. There was a glad little yip in Peter's throat, but he choked it back. Jolly Roger was strangely quiet, and Peter could not hear Nada, and as he sniffed, and gulped the lump in his throat, he seemed to catch the breath of something impending in the air. Then Jolly Roger came in, and sat down in darkness near the table, and for a long time Peter kept his eyes fixed on the shadowy blotch of him there in the gloom, and listened to his breathing, until he could stand it no longer, and whined.

The sound stirred Jolly Roger. He got up, struck a match—and then blew the match out, and came and sat down beside Peter, and stroked him with his hand.

"Peter," he said in a low voice, "I guess we've got a job on our hands. You began it to-day—and I've got to finish it. We're goin' to kill Jed Hawkins!"

Peter snuggled closer.

"Mebby I'm bad, and mebbly the law ought to have me," Jolly Roger went on in the darkness, "but until to-night I never made up my mind to kill a man. I'm ready—now. If Jed Hawkins hurts her again we're goin' to kill him! Understand, *Pied-bot?*"

He got up, and Peter could hear him undressing.

Then he made a nest for Peter on the floor, and stretched himself out in the bunk; and after that, for a long time, there seemed to be something heavier than the gloom of night in the cabin for Peter, and he listened and waited and prayed in his dog way for Nada's return, and wondered why it was that she left him so long. And the Night People held high carnival under the yellow moon, and there was flight and terror and slaughter in the glow of it—and Jolly Roger slept, and the wolf howled nearer, and the creek chortled its incessant song of running water, and in the end Peter's eyes closed, and a red-eyed ermine peeped over the sill into the man- and dog-scented stillness of the outlaw's cabin.

For many days after that first night in the cabin, Peter did not see Nada. There was more rain, and the creek flooded higher, so that each time Jolly Roger went over to

Cragg's Ridge he took his life in his hands in fording the stream. Peter saw no one but Jolly Roger, and at the end of the second week he was going about on his mended leg. But there would always be a limp in his gait, and always his right hind-foot would leave a peculiar mark in the trail.

These two weeks of helplessness were an education in Peter's life and were destined to leave their mark upon him always. He learned to know Jolly Roger, not alone from seeing events, but through an intuitive instinct that grew swiftly somewhere in his shrewd head. This instinct, given widest scope in these weeks of helplessness, developed faster than any other in him, until in the end he could judge Jolly Roger's humor by the sound of his approaching footsteps. Never was there a waking hour in which he was not fighting to comprehend the mystery of the change that had come over his life. He knew that Nada was gone, and each day that passed put her farther away from him, yet he also sensed the fact that Jolly Roger went to her, and when the outlaw returned to the cabin Peter was filled with a yearning hope that Nada was returning with him.

But gradually Peter came to think less about Nada, and



"I won't go, Nada," he said.
"I promise I won't go—until
you tell me I can."

more about Jolly Roger, until at last his heart beat with a love for this man which was greater than all other things in his world. And in these days Jolly Roger found in Peter's comradeship and growing understanding a comforting outlet for the things which at times consumed him. Peter saw it all—hours when Jolly Roger's voice and laughter filled the cabin with cheer and happiness, and others when his face was set in grim lines, with that hard, far-away look in his eyes that Peter could never quite make out. It was at such times, when Jolly Roger held a choking grip on the love in his heart, that he told Peter things which he had never revealed to a human so I.

In the dusk of one evening, as he sat wet with the fording of the creek, he said to Peter, "We ought to go, Peter. We ought to pack up—and go to-night. Because—sometimes I'm afraid of myself, *Pied-bot*. I'd kill for her. I'd die for her. I'd give up the whole world, and live in a prison cell—if I could have her with me. And that's dangerous, Peter, because we can't have her. It's impossible, boy. She doesn't guess why I'm here. She doesn't know I've been outlawin' it for a dozen years, just for the pure deviltry of it, and that I'm hiding here because the Police would never think of looking for Jolly Roger McKay this close to civilization. If I told her, she would think I was worse

And that night Peter knew that Jolly Roger tossed about restlessly in his bunk, and slept but little.

It was in the third week after his hurt that Peter saw Nada. By that time he could easily follow Jolly Roger as far as the fording-place, and there he would wait, sometimes hours at a stretch, while his comrade and master went over to Cragg's Ridge. But frequently Jolly Roger would not cross, but remained with Peter, and would lie on his back at the edge of a grassy knoll they had found, reading one of the little old-fashioned red books which Peter knew were very precious to him. Often he wondered what was between the faded red covers that was so interesting, and if he could have read he would have seen such titles as "Margaret of Anjou," "History of Napoleon," "History of Peter the Great," "Caesar," "Columbus the Discoverer," and so on through the

twenty volumes which Jolly Roger had taken from a wilderness mail two years before, and which he now prized next to his life.

This afternoon, as they lay in the sleepy quiet of June, Jolly Roger answered the questioning inquisitiveness in Peter's face and eyes.

"You see, *Pied-bot*, it was this way," he said, beginning a little apologetically. "I was dying for something to read, and I figured there'd be something on the Mail—newspapers, you know. So I stopped it, and tied up the driver, and found these. And I swear I didn't take anything else—that time. There's twenty of them, and they weigh nine pounds, and in the last two years I've toted them five thousand miles. I wouldn't trade them for my weight in gold, and I'm pretty heavy. I named you after one of them—Peter. I pretty near called you Christopher Columbus. And some day we've got to take these books to the man they were going to, Peter. I've promised myself that. It seems sort of like stealing the soul out of some one. I just borrowed them, that's all. And I've kept the address of the owner, away upon the edge of

the Barrens. Some day we're going to make a special trip to take the books home."

Peter all at once had become interested in something else, and following the direction of his pointed nose Jolly Roger saw Nada standing quietly on

the opposite side of the stream, looking at them. In a moment Peter knew her, and he was trembling in every muscle when Jolly Roger caught him up under his arm, and with a happy laugh plunged through the creek with him. For a good five minutes after that Jolly Roger stood aside watching Peter and Nada, and there was a glisten of dampness in his eyes when he saw the wet on Nada's cheeks, and the whimpering joy of Peter as he caressed her face and hands. Three weeks had been a long time to Peter, but he could see no difference in the little mistress he worshipped. There were still the radiant curls to hide his nose in, the gentle hands, the sweet voice, the warm thrill of her body as she hugged him in her arms. He did not know that she had new shoes and a new dress, and that some of the color had gone from her red lips, (Continued on page 134)



than Jed Hawkins, and she wouldn't believe me if I told her I've outlawed with my wits instead of a gun, and that I've never criminally hurt a person in my life. No, she wouldn't believe that, Peter. And she—she cares for me, *Pied-bot*. That's the hell of it! And she's got faith in me, and would go with me to the Missioner's to-morrow. I know it. I can see it, feel it, and I—"

His fingers tightened in the loose hide of Peter's neck. "Peter," he whispered in the thickening darkness. "I believe there's a God, but He's a different sort of God than most people believe in. He lives in the trees out there, in the flowers, in the birds, the sky, in everything—and I hope that God will strike me dead if I do what isn't right with her, Peter! I do. I hope He strikes me dead!"



At that instant Kelly saw Roger standing by the door, and their eyes clashed. "And to-night everything is

Kelly of Charles Street

Illustrated by F. R. Gruger

EXPERIMENTING with human chemicals in the hope of a good sizable explosion now and then was Audrey Witherby's besetting sin. She would have adored mixing a Methodist bishop with a burlesque queen by some such ingenuous device as pairing them off as dinner partners. She was the born iconoclast, the conventional ever affronted her, and she could no more resist a fling at the established order whenever a chance presented, than a small boy can resist shying a stone through a window of a deserted house. It was in such a mood that she maneuvered Roger Dighton and Kelly together.

Now in a way she was fond of Roger, but he annoyed her. He was her husband's friend—reason enough for a little feminine antagonism—but that was only the beginning. She harried

him persistently, assuring him that he was a reactionary, a Philistine—a barnacle on the ship of progress.

"What are you?" he demanded, amused. "Pale cerise or out and out red?"

"I'd rather be *that*," she retorted, "than lavender and old lace."

This had made him laugh outright and even she had smiled, in spite of herself, at the ineptitude of the phrase. Lean and extraordinarily fit, with his firm lips relaxed in the boyish grin that revealed white teeth contrasting pleasantly with the tan of his face—it was March but he had just returned from Aiken—he suggested anything but lavender and old lace.

"Anyway," she amended, "you *are* the awful product of all your hymn-singing ancestors plus the horrible results of your environment and education."



on the house," she added recklessly. "Eat, drink and be merry—for to-morrow Kelly of Charles Street dies "

Royal Brown, himself a Bostonian, wrote us a letter recently explaining the young man in this delightful love story. "A real Bostonian," he said, "is so conservative that he wouldn't even send flowers to a girl without first consulting his attorney. This story is about the Boston rarefied social atmosphere—"where the Lowells speak only to Cabots, and the Cabots speak only to God."

This was perhaps the truth. From the moment breath filled his little lungs—and the same little lungs shook the lavender panes of the dignified old house in Beacon Street—the traditions of his caste had begun to operate. At the age of fifteen minutes he had been enrolled at Groton by a father who, fifteen minutes before, had been prey to a soul-congealing conviction that he was about to be a widower.

From Groton Roger went to Harvard and from Harvard he went to France; to fly in the French sky-blue until he could shift to American olive-drab. From France he returned once more to Boston to practise law, to join decorously in certain movements having to do with good government, to play golf at Brookline, tennis at Longwood, polo at Dedham and otherwise conduct himself as was expected from one of his name in Boston. In

brief, Roger fulfilled his destiny as a Dighton in all respects save one. He had yet to marry some nice girl, of as impeccable ancestry, and make a start at a new generation.

The night Roger was tolled to Kelly's began with a dinner at Audrey's. There were only five guests in all. Roger, whose amused perception of Audrey's tactics would have amazed that young matron, knew why he had been invited the minute she introduced his dinner partner. The latter was a bobbed-hair blonde with tortoise-shell glasses who had come to visit the Witherbys from just that part of New York one might suspect.

"I wonder," thought Roger, "how long it will be before we get to free love."

It came with crackers and cheese and demi-tasses.

"Then you believe in free love?" the bobbed-haired one de-

manded, eagerly, so eagerly, indeed, that one might have wondered if love under any condition had not been denied her.

Exquisitely courteous, as always, he nodded smiling consent.

"It should be as free as air," he acquiesced.

"And you believe that children should be brought up by the state?"

Audrey, monopolized by one of the unrecognized young geniuses she was forever discovering, lost the thread of his discourse—the warp and woof of which was himself and his genius—while she waited upon Roger's reply.

"I'm not sure about that," said Roger, imperturbably. "Wouldn't it be better to revert to the Spartan method and let the offspring survive or perish on Mount Taggetus?"

The bobbed-hair enthusiast looked slightly taken back, for once she must stop and think before speaking. But before she could make even a beginning of this unfamiliar process Audrey abruptly thrust back her cup and rose.

"Let's go down to Kelly's," she said.

No one was surprised. The swift suggestion was characteristic of Audrey. They arose obediently, understanding without the saying that Kelly's was one of those "little places" Audrey was forever ferreting out.

What they did not understand was that Audrey, seeing that the bobbed-hair girl was a dud, was determined to try a bit of high explosive. Kelly's was all of that.

The March wind was a young tempest, underfoot was a whitening of snow, but overhead the stars shone with jewel-like intensity. The street they followed down to Charles was a part of old Boston, preserved in all its inexplicable charm. Even Roger's companion was not insensible to it.

"Isn't it quaint!" she commented. "So delightfully old-fashioned. But where—and what—is Kelly's?"

"Don't ask him," Audrey cut in. "He's quaint and old-fashioned, too. He never even heard of Kelly's."

Roger admitted it. "It sounds to me," he added, "like a saloon. Are we being led to an oasis of hooch in a desert of prohibition?"

"You'll see!" promised—or threatened—Audrey.

Then, "Here is Kelly's!" she announced.

They ascended a dark stairway, refuge for all the vagrant odors of the neighborhood, and came to a door before which Audrey paused to knock. The door swung slowly open, disclosing a tall youth whose expenditures for barber's services during the past six months must have been *nil*.

"You have cards?" he asked, as if he doubted it.

This pretense of exclusiveness, practised by many of Audrey's haunts, always amused Roger. He likened it to a small-boys' circus, where the admission was two bent pins—if you happened to have them.

"Tell him," he whispered, ironically, "that you haven't, but that you are Mrs. Smith of Brookline. Then he'll let you in."

It appeared, however, that Audrey had a card. The flicker of yellow pasteboard reassured the doubter and they were permitted to enter.

The room, once a harness loft, was lighted by a scattering of candles placed at irregular intervals upon the long, narrow tables that flanked the walls. The prevailing semi-murk, and the cigarette smoke that swirled lazily here and there, created the inevitable atmosphere. Audrey found seats at one of the tables. The bobbed-hair one, definitely abandoning Roger, devoted herself to the unrecognized genius. They began to talk to each other—simultaneously. Across the table a pretty girl with very white nose and very red lips smoked a cigarette as, under long lids disdainfully lowered, she surveyed Roger. The quality of her scrutiny made him squirm instinctively. She noticed that and was pleased. She would have been less so had she read his thought, which was that she ought to be spanked and sent to bed.

Audrey turned to Roger. "See the man—the big Russian?" she queried.

Roger's eyes followed her gesture. "I do. What about him?"

"That's Nikolai," breathed Audrey. "The police are watching him."

The Russian, leaning across the table and talking volubly to his companions, opened expressive fingers so that the candle-glow briefly illumined them.

"I should think," commented Roger, regarding those fingers, "that the Board of Health might also be interested in him."

"Don't be nasty—that's just batik on his hands. He works in it wonderfully—" Audrey broke off abruptly to announce, "There's Kelly now."

Now Roger had had all along an idea that Kelly was a fiery young Sinn Feiner. Instead he discovered Kelly to be

indubitably feminine, and if there were Irish blood in her there was nothing, save her name, to suggest it. Kelly was of a lovely type that is not uncommon and yet, for some reason, has escaped celebration—the gray-eyed blonde. She wore an odd frock of some off shade that blended marvelously well with the tones of her golden brown hair. The candle-light revealed an adorable mouth with an upper lip just short enough to give her face the piquancy it needed to redeem its perfection of modeling.

The Russian, Nikolai, had reached out and captured Kelly. She paused to speak to him and his companions, unconscious that his arm still lightly restrained her until her shifting glance encountered Roger's. The disapproval in his eyes, too marked to be doubted, puzzled her for a second. Then she smiled.

"He's that terribly conventional young man Audrey spoke of," she guessed. "And he's disapproving of me—awfully!"

That, to Kelly, was a challenge. An irresistible impulse to really horrify him caused her to move her hand from Nikolai's chair to his shoulder and, taking a cigarette from the table, bent her pretty head to light it from his. The Russian, thus encouraged, gave her a little hug.

"Oh! she's a terrible flirt," acknowledged Audrey. "But that's because she's southern—"

"Professional—or genuine?" suggested Roger.

"Absolutely genuine! She's a F. F. V. Her father was in the Spanish War and he named her after an Irish sergeant who nursed him through yellow fever. Kelly Carewe—doesn't it sound like her? And isn't she irresistible?"

"Evidence to that effect is before my eyes," said Roger. "But if, as you say, she comes from decent people—"

"Decent people!" exploded Audrey. "Why, *they* come from Cavalier stock and they look down on mere Mayflowerites as descendants of a lot of disgruntled farmers. I never in my life met anybody as narrow as you Bostonians!"

"She's coming," warned Roger, but managed himself to edge in an ironic last word. "So *they* are narrow, too!"

Audrey gave him a withering glance and turned to greet Kelly.

"So glad you got here," said Kelly, addressing Audrey. But her smile encompassed them all, even Roger, who had automatically come to his feet.

The quality of her voice was unusual, and the way she used it was a whole bag of tricks—trust Kelly for that. Her eyes went to Roger's. They were a limpid gray, something the shade of a clear shallow brook flowing over bottoms of brown sand.

"Are you going—so soon?" she asked, wide-eyed.

In her voice, however, was a hint of mockery. But Roger grasped at the suggestion. He felt horribly self-conscious standing; neither Witherby nor the unrecognized—or rather only self-recognized—genius had risen.

"I'm afraid I must," he assured her.

"You must give Mr. Dighton a card," interjected Audrey, quickly.

The corner of Kelly's mouth quirked, ever so slightly. "So I must," she acknowledged, demurely, and from a pocket in her frock she drew one of the bits of yellow pasteboard and scribbled his name across it.

"It was quite tame to-night," she said, as she presented the card to him. "But when we really get started and people become more at home here I hope to have some really interesting discussions. Have you ever heard Nikolai talk?"

"Only vicariously," Roger assured her.

The swift smile she gave him was delicious and Roger softened toward her—she had at least the glimmerings of an intellect.

Roger managed to cut himself free with an imperturbable good-night, but when he reached the street he was conscious of an unwonted, inexplicable irritation. He had seen other girls, in similar places, pawed over—the phrase was his own—by more or less unsavory males and had catalogued them as types, to be regarded with compassion tinged with amusement. All of Audrey's "little places" amused him, so he had assured her in the past, with an impenetrable good humor.

Now, however, his lips set humorlessly. "*She*," he was thinking, "knows better. And she ought to be ashamed of herself."

From Kelly's it was less than five minutes' walk to the impeccably correct apartments overlooking the Embankment and the Charles River in which—the apartments, of course, not the river—Roger had quarters. But to-night he walked on past, to the river itself. As he paused at the guard rail his hands, thrust in his pockets, discovered the card Kelly had scribbled. He drew it out and, in the light of a neighboring arc-lamp, studied it.

Kelly of Charles Street
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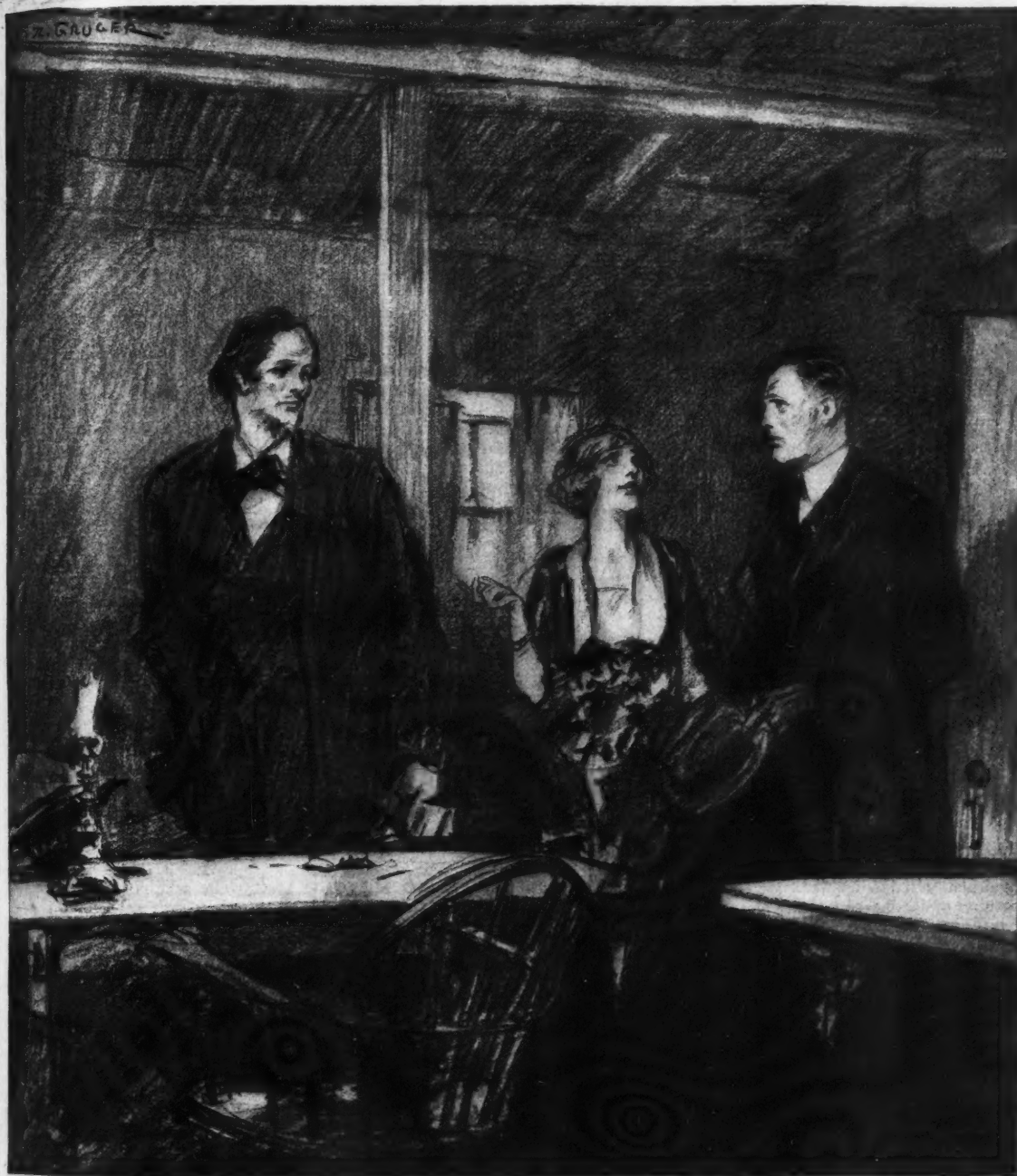
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Nikolai and Kelly were alone in the room. "Oh!" exclaimed Kelly, "It's Mister—" She seemed to search for the name.

"Evidently she believes in phonetic spelling," he decided. Then he tore it to bits and scattered them on the ample bosom of the Charles which obligingly carried them off seaward.

"I won't need that again," he assured himself grimly. In which Audrey would have concurred. She had a comfortable feeling that she had started something that evening, something that, with a little stirring, might develop excitement. She was ready to stir; to see Kelly again Roger would need no card.

Nevertheless he won a brief respite. An old aunt of Audrey's died in Philadelphia. Audrey, after protesting that they had always hated each other and that there was no reason in the world why she should go to the funeral and that it was exactly such conventionalities that she particularly detested, proceeded to pack up and go.

No pressure, accordingly, was put on Roger; he was free to carry out his intention of ignoring Kelly and Kelly's. And

yet, curiously enough—he did not often favor Charles Street with his presence—he found himself there late at night on the very day on which Audrey had returned from Philadelphia.

"Do I smell like a funeral?" she demanded of her husband. "If I don't it's a wonder. Aunt Adelaide had just such a funeral as you would have imagined her having. Let's go somewhere where I can forget it."

They went over to Kelly's. Now, that Audrey was there, or even returned from Philadelphia, Roger had no idea. He was taking the air—in Charles Street. When he came opposite Kelly's he paused, although he had not the slightest intention of crossing over and entering. He merely regarded the dimly lighted windows, while he considered the case of Kelly—academically, he would have had you believe, and impartially.

Time—four whole days of it—had softened his first estimate. He was thinking now that she was young and impulsive and very

Kelly of Charles Street

much in need of counsel such as neither Audrey, nor any of her chosen intimates were apt to give her.

"She doesn't realize," his thought ran on, "that Nikolai—"

He would have gone on, but before he could resume a clock somewhere struck eleven and Audrey and Witherby emerged from the darkened doorway across the way.

"I hope," Roger was praying devoutly, "that she didn't recognize me. She'd get the wrong idea, sure as fate."

As for that, Audrey, whose eyes were quick and sharp, had recognized him at once. And as for the idea she got it.

"He scuttled off like a scared rabbit," she assured her husband. "Oh! wouldn't it be too perfectly thrilling for words if he fell in love with her?"

Witherby glanced at her, his eyes aghast. "In love with her?" he echoed. And then, with masculine finality he added, "Look here, Audrey, I won't have you match-making."

"It's for his own good. He's too smug and self-satisfied—"

"Oh I say!" began Witherby loyally.

"I don't care *what* you say," she assured him—gratuitously. "I feel like throwing a bomb at him sometimes." She paused, giggled and added, "And Kelly is sort of a bomb!"

To see Kelly again Roger would assuredly need no card. The next morning Audrey telephoned Kelly; at noon they lunched together. A man at an adjoining table wondered what so amused them. After lunch they paused in the lobby beside the telephone booths and there Audrey called Roger at his office.

"I must see you," she told him.

"I'll be here until four," he assured her—it must, he thought, be something to do with her aunt's death.

"I'll see you at quarter past four then—"

"But," began Roger. "I—"

"At Kelly's—where we were the other night," she finished.

"I can't—possibly," protested Roger hastily.

"Thanks, a wfully—good-by," said Audrey and hung up at once.

The telephone operator, surveying her as she searched for an elusive coin, made shrewd surmise. "Probably been stringing some guy," thought she.

Now the law firm with which Roger was associated was both distinguished and dignified. No member of it, one can feel assured, saw clients in such places as Kelly's. Roger was of two minds whether he should go, but he went. Ascending the stairs, murky even with the brilliant sunshine splaying the street outside, he came to the door and paused to knock.

Seconds passed before it opened, revealing Kelly, eyes wide, and beyond her, seated at a table, Nikolai—Nikolai the unsavory, Nikolai whom the police were watching. They were alone in the room.

"Oh!" exclaimed Kelly.

"It's Mister—" she seemed to search for his name.

"Dighton," supplied Roger.

"I remember—now," she assured him. "You were here with Mrs. Witherby. Come in. We're not open until five, but I think I can find a French pastry and give you a cup of tea."

"Please don't bother," replied Roger. "I've come to see Mrs. Witherby. She said she would meet me here at quarter past four—on business."

"Oh—I see!" She smiled. "Have you met Nikolai?"

"I have not had the pleasure," admitted Roger, austerely.

Nikolai smiled disagreeably, revealing strong white teeth, ran his unspeakable hands through his long black hair and rising to his good six feet two, wandered out toward the kitchen, as one who enjoys an unchallenged freedom.

"Audrey will probably be here soon," said Kelly. "Sit down."

Then she followed Nikolai, leaving Roger feeling absurdly self-conscious and uncomfortable. From the kitchen came the murmur of conversation. Ten minutes passed, twenty. He rose abruptly—he would wait no longer. He paused irresolutely, wishing to announce his intention to depart but unwilling to intrude in the *tête-à-tête*. Kelly, however, had heard his chair go back. She appeared in the doorway, the light behind her catching the ends of her hair and haloing it.

"Going?" she asked.

"I'm afraid Mrs. Witherby must have forgotten me. If she should come—"

"Which way are you going?" she interrupted.

Roger hesitated. Then: "Just for a walk," he said, evasively.

"Wait a minute and I'll come too."

The suggestion left Roger too surprised for words, but she waited for none. And she was as good as her word.

"I didn't keep you long, did I?" she asked.

Her glance invited his approval and in rough tweeds, with a boyish Eton collar—to say nothing of a new and very smart sailor—she looked like a girl of whom Roger might have conceivably approved. But she destroyed the illusion at once by turning to Nikolai who, plainly sulky, had trailed in after.

"If I'm not back at five," she said, "start the kettle and make tea for anybody who comes in."

No snail ever withdrew into its shell as swiftly as Roger did into his. But she seemed not to notice. As they reached the street and a swirl of wind caused him to clutch his hat, she sniffed the air delightedly.

"Spring is coming," she announced. "I can smell it—can't you?"

The lovely voice she could use so effectively was a lure to relax and smile at her, but he ignored it.

"It will probably snow again to-morrow," he replied.

Kelly laughed outright. "Are you always so matter of fact?" she demanded. "If I thought so I'd turn back at once."

Nevertheless she didn't. They turned a corner and she caught sight of the river, its blue whipped to whitecaps by the steady gale.

"I suppose that if I said that"—she made a pretty little gesture—"was beautiful, you would say it was all H₂O and hardly pure H₂O at that!"

The never ceasing insidiousness of her! In spite of himself Roger smiled.

"That's better," she commented. And then, as his eyes recanted, she put her gloved fingers on his arm impulsively as a child might have.

"Please play a little," she pleaded. Her voice broke ever so slightly and he would have sworn that there was a hint of tears in her eyes. "I'm just a wee bit homesick to-day—perhaps because it's spring."

Now what could a man do with a girl like that? Roger didn't know—though his ancestors would have. They would have burned her. Kelly was a witch.

"But you can go home," he suggested, lamely.

The animation that, like sunlight on the water, gave her so much of her charm, vanished—yet left her still charming.

"Suppose," she said, somberly, "that you should go away from home to become a great lawyer. Suppose everybody said you were sure to be a great lawyer and you thought so too. And suppose you were just a flat failure. Would you feel like going back home—even if you were homesick?"

So that was it!



Kelly's voice broke, and Roger realized then that she was under high tension. "What frightened you?" he asked.

"Everybody thought I was to be a great singer," she went on. "I came here for a year at the Conservatory until things should get settled abroad. After that—but what's the use? There isn't going to be any after that."

Ineptly enough he said, "You aren't going to sing?" "Not as I wanted to. 'The Maiden's Prayer' perhaps"—she made a little grimace—"and 'The Palms' in the church back home. But never Carmen or Madama Butterfly and all the things I dreamed. Let's not talk of it."

The little shrug she gave her trim shoulders discarded the subject. Yet his thought ran on. Whether she realized it or not he was playing a dangerous game. If Nikolai were arrested—which was always within the realms of possibility—Kelly would surely be involved. He wished it might be possible to make her realize this danger, but he felt at the same time that to her danger would always be but a challenge.

In the end he ventured: "Has it ever occurred to you that the police might arrest Nikolai?"

Her eyes met his, candid as a clear brook running over bottoms of brown sand, yet full of mischievous imps.

"Why everybody knows that!" she retorted gaily. "That is what makes him so interesting."

Roger refused to be beguiled. "Would you care to be involved?" he asked, pointedly.

"It's the dream of my young life," she flashed back. "I can think of nothing more perfectly thrilling."

"Your family?" he persisted. "Would they—"

"Of course they'd throw fits," she confessed calmly. "Families always do—that's their chief excuse for existence."

In her voice there was a shade of bitterness that he missed. He made no reply, and they walked a way in silence, and then, with a swift side-glance at him, she played the subtlest card the feminine hand holds.

"Tell me about yourself and your work," she commanded.

The sun had set. The blue dusk deepened, the lights along the bridges sent shafts of quivering gold into the river's bosom. The smartly dressed children on roller-skates were gathered in by their nurses and, protesting as volubly as their less aristocratic little brothers and sisters do, were none the less firmly conveyed home. Finally a clock struck and Kelly, voicing her surprise that it was six and not five, said she must run.

"Thank you for everything," she said very sweetly, when they paused at the foot of the stairs that led to her domain. "You'll come to see me some day soon, won't you?"

"It is good of you to ask me," replied Roger, instinctively rather than consciously evasive.

Later he remembered Audrey and telephoned her.

"Oh! it's you, Roger!" came her voice. "So sorry—but I couldn't get down there after all."

Roger swallowed. "Do you want to come to the office to-morrow?"

"Oh, it's all right now—it settled itself," Audrey assured him.

Roger hesitated then. "Was there really anything in the first place?"

"Do you think I'm lying to you?" she demanded, sweetly.

He did think just that, but he didn't dare tell her so. But after he had hung up he stood there with hands thrust in his pockets and his brows puckered.

"What," he was thinking, "was her little game anyway?"

In the end he gave it up. One simply couldn't fathom Audrey. Naturally he was not privy to the telephone conversation she was at that very instant carrying on with Kelly.

"Did you have the stage all set?" she demanded. "And did he look horrified?"

(Continued on page 115)

Alias THE LONE WOLF

By
Louis Joseph Vance

*A story of Adventure,
Love and Intrigue in the
Underworld of Two Continents*

Illustrations by Pruett Carter

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR:

MICHAEL LANYARD, *alias* "the Lone Wolf," once a notorious criminal but now a member of the British Secret Service, meets, under romantic circumstances, Madame Eve de Montalais, widow of a French officer. He rescues her and her family from an attempted robbery by her new chauffeur, Dupont, who is later recognized as an *apache*, son of the notorious criminal Popinot. Lanyard is wounded and is nursed at the de Montalais château.

An automobile party, seeking shelter from a storm, visit the château; the strange visitors make themselves known as Whitaker Monk and Phinuit, Americans, and the Comte and Comtesse de Lorgnes. Some time later the famous de Montalais jewels mysteriously vanish. Lanyard, realizing that he would be suspected, reveals his identity to Eve, who expresses confidence in him. He pledges himself to recover her jewels.

On the way to Paris he encounters Dupont, who is trailing the Comte de Lorgnes; the Comte is later found murdered in his berth.

A tour of the all-night restaurants in Paris reveals that the Comtesse is really Liane de Lorme, a notorious beauty of the underworld. Lanyard follows her to her home, where he arrives just in time to save her from an attack by Dupont. In gratitude, Liane offers to put him on the trail of the missing gems.

Assuming the rôle of Liane's brother, Lanyard is conveyed by motor to Cherbourg, where he and Liane board the yacht *Sybarite*. There he finds Monk and Phinuit, under Liane's orders and apparently in possession of the jewels. He learns from them that the yacht is being employed for smuggling purposes.

On the seventh night of the voyage Liane tells Lanyard that she loves him, but he believes that her declaration is but pretense. As she leaves him to go below, she catches a glimpse of a figure who she believes is Dupont (Popinot); with a cry of terror she falls into a faint.

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XXIII

THE CIGARETTE

LANYARD found himself exchanging looks of mystification with Collison, and heard his own voice make the flat statement, "But there is nobody. . . ." Collison muttered words which he took to be: "No, and never was." "But you must have seen him from the bridge," Lanyard insisted blankly, "if . . ."

"I looked around as soon as I heard her call out," Collison replied; "but I didn't see anybody, only *mademoiselle* here—and you, of course, with that match."

"Please help me up," Liane Delorme asked in a faint voice. Collison lent a hand. In the support and shelter of Lanyard's arm the woman's body quivered like that of a frightened child. "I must go to my stateroom," she sighed uncertainly. "But I am afraid . . ."

"Do not be. Remember Mr. Collison and I . . . Besides, you know, there was nobody . . ."

The assertion seemed to exasperate her; her voice discovered new strength and violence.

"But I am telling you I saw . . . that assassin!"—she shuddered again—"standing there, in the shadow, glaring at me as if I had surprised him and he did not know what next to do. I think he must have been spying down through the skylight; it was the glow from it showed me his red, dirty face of a pig!"

"You came aft on the port side, didn't you?" Lanyard inquired of the second mate.

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*This Is the \$5,000 Prize
Contest Story. Can You
Tell How the Jewels
Will Be Recovered?
For Conditions,
See Page 123*



A final pistol-shot sounded, and the burly figure revolved slowly on a heel, tottered and plunged headlong.

Collison nodded. "Running," he said—"couldn't imagine what was up!"

"It is easy not to see what one is not looking for," Lanyard mused, staring forward along the starboard side. "If a man had dropped flat and squirmed along until in the shelter of the engine-room ventilators, he could have run forward—bending low, you know—without your seeing him."

"But you were standing here, to starboard—!"

"I tell you, that match was blinding me," Lanyard affirmed irritably. "Besides, I wasn't looking—except at my sister—wondering what was the matter."

Collison started. "Excuse me," he said, reminded—"if *mademoiselle's* all right, I ought to get back to the bridge."

"Take me below," Liane begged. "I must speak with Captain Monk."

Monk and Phinuit were taking their ease plus nightcaps in the captain's sitting-room. A knock brought a prompt invitation to "Come in!" Lanyard thrust the door open and curtly addressed Monk: "Mademoiselle Delorme wishes to see you." The eloquent eyebrows indicated surprise and resignation, and

Monk got up and inserted himself into his white linen tunic. Phinuit, more sensitive to the accent of something amiss, hurried out in unceremonious shirt-sleeves. "What's up?" he demanded, looking from Lanyard's grave face to Liane's face of pallor and distress. Lanyard informed him in a few words.

"Impossible!" Phinuit commenced.

"Nonsense," Monk added, speaking directly to Liane. "You imagined it all."

She had recovered much of her composure, enough to enable her to shrug her disdain of such stupidity.

"I tell you only what my two eyes saw."

"To be sure," Monk agreed with a specious air of being wide open to conviction. "What became of him, then?"

"You ask me that, knowing that in stress of terror I fainted!" The eyebrows achieved an effect of studied weariness. "And you saw nobody, *monsieur*? And Collison didn't, either?"

Lanyard shook his head to each question. "Still, it is possible—"

Monk cut him short impatiently. "All gammon—all in her eye! No man bigger than a cockroach could have smuggled himself aboard this yacht without my being told. I know my ship. I know my men, I know what I'm talking about."

"Presently," Liane prophesied darkly, "you may be talking about nothing."

At a loss, Monk muttered: "Don't get you . . ."

"When you find yourself, some fine morning, with your throat cut in your sleep, like poor de Lorgnes—or garroted, as I might have been."

"I'm not going to lose any sleep . . ." Monk began.

"Lose none before you have the vessel searched," Liane



Leadened-eyed and flushed of countenance, the author of that low mutter in the dark looked up and mumbled the customary greeting, "Morning, Monseer De orme."

pleaded, with a change of tone. "You know, *messieurs*, I am not a woman given to hallucinations. I saw. . . . And I tell you, while that assassin is at liberty aboard this yacht, not one of our lives is worth a *sou*—no, not one!"

"Oh, you shall have your search." Monk gave in as one who indulges a childish whim. "But I can tell you now what we'll find—or won't."

"Then Heaven help us all!" Liane went swiftly to the door of her room, but there hesitated, looking back in appeal to Lanyard. "I am afraid . . ."

"Let me have a look round first."

And when Lanyard had satisfied himself there was nobody concealed in any room of Liane's suite, and had been rewarded with a glance of gratitude, "I shall lock myself in, of course," the woman said from the threshold. "And I have my pistol, too."

"But I assure you," Monk commented in heavy sarcasm, "our intentions are those of honorable men."

The door slammed, and the sound of the key turning in the lock followed. Monk trained the eyebrows into an aspect of long-suffering patience.

"A glass too much . . . Seein' things!"

"No," Lanyard voiced shortly his belief, "you are wrong. Liane saw something."

"Nobody questions that," Phinuit yawned. "What one does question is whether she saw a man or a figment of her imagination—some effect of the shadows that momentarily suggested a man."

"Shadows do play queer tricks at night, at sea," Monk agreed. "I remember once—"

"Then let us look the ground over and see if we can make that explanation acceptable to our own intelligences," Lanyard cut in. "No harm in that."

Phinuit fetched a pocket flash-lamp, and the three reconnoitered exhaustively the spot where the apparition had manifested itself to the woman. By no strain of credulity could one fancy

one saw anybody standing there. On the other hand, when Phinuit obligingly posed himself in the shadow between the mouth of the companionway and the skylight, it had to be admitted that the glow from either side provided fairly good cover for one who might wish to linger there, observing and unobserved.

"Still, I don't believe she saw anybody," Monk persisted; "a phantom Popinot, if anything!"

"But wait. What is it we have here?"

Lanyard, scrutinizing the deck with the flashlamp, stooped, picked up something, and offered it on an outspread palm upon which he trained the clear electric beam.

"Cigarette stub?" Monk said, and sniffed. "That's a famous find!"

"A cigarette manufactured by the French Régie."

"And well stepped on, too," Phinuit observed. "Well, what about it?"

"Who that uses this part of the deck would be apt to insult his palate with such a cigarette? No one of us—hardly any one of the officers or stewards."

"Some deck-hand might have sneaked aft for a look-see, expecting to find the quarterdeck deserted at this hour."

"Even ordinary seamen avoid, when they can, what the Régie sells under the name of tobacco. Nor is it likely such a one would risk the consequences of defying Captain Monk's celebrated discipline."

"Then you believe it was Popinot, too?"

"I believe you would do well to make the search you have promised thorough and immediate."

"Plenty of time," Monk replied wearily. "I'll turn this old tub inside out, if you insist, in the morning."

"But why, *monsieur*, do you remain so obstinately incredulous?"

"Well!" Monk drawled, "I've known the pretty lady a number of years, and if you ask me, she's quite up to playing little games all her own."

"Pretending, you mean—for private ends?"

The eyebrows offered a gesture urbane and sceptical. "Just so, *monsieur*!"

Whether or not sleep brought Monk better counsel, the morning's ransacking of the vessel and the examination of her crew proved more painstaking than Lanyard had expected. And the upshot was precisely as Monk had foretold, precisely negative. He reported drily to this effect at an informal conference in his quarters after luncheon. He himself had supervised the entire search and had made a good part of it in person, he said. No nook or cranny of the yacht had been overlooked.

"I trust *mademoiselle* is satisfied," he concluded with a mockingly civil movement of eyebrows toward Liane.

Her reply was the slightest of shrugs executed by perfect shoulders beneath a gown of cynical transparency. Lanyard was aware that the violet eyes, large with apprehension, flashed transiently his way, as if in hope that he might submit some helpful suggestion or objection. But he had neither to offer. If the manner in which the search had been conducted were open to criticism, that would have to be made by a mind better informed than his in respect of things maritime.

He heard Phinuit's voice utter, "Barring, of course, the possibility of connivance on the part of officers or crew."

"Don't be an ass!" Monk snapped.

"Don't be unreasonable: I am simply as God made me."

"Well, it was a nasty job of work."

"Now, listen." Phinuit rose to leave, as one considering the conference at an end. "If you persist in picking on me, skipper, I'll ravish you of those magnificent eyebrows with a safety-razor sometime when you're asleep, and leave you as dumb as an Italian peddler who's lost both arms."

Liane followed him out in silence, but her carriage was that of a queen of tragedy. Lanyard got up in turn, and to his amazement found the eyebrows signaling confidentially to him.

"What the devil!" he exclaimed, in an open stare.

Immediately the eyebrows became conciliatory.

"Well, *monsieur*, and what is your opinion?"

"Why, to me it would seem there might be something in the suggestion of Monsieur Phinuit."

"Ridiculous!" Monk dismissed it finally. "Do you know, I—rather fancy my own. . . . Liane's up to something," he added, explanatory; and then, as Lanyard said nothing, "You haven't told me yet what she was talking to you about last night just before her—alleged fright."

Lanyard contrived a successful offensive with his own eyebrows.

"Oh?" he said, "haven't I?" and walked out.

Here was a new angle to consider. Monk's attitude hinted at a possible rift in the *entente cordiale* of the conspirators. Why else should he mistrust Liane's sincerity in asserting that she had seen Popinot? Aside from the question of what he imagined she could possibly gain by making a scene out of nothing—a riddle unreadable—one wondered consumedly what had happened to render Monk suspicious of her good faith.

The explanation, when it was finally revealed to Lanyard by the most trivial of incidents, made his blindness seem laughable.

For three more days the life of the ship followed in unruffled tranquillity its ordered course. Liane Delorme made no secret of her unabated timidity, yet suffered it with such fortitude as could not fail to win admiration. If she was a bit more subdued, a trifle less high-spirited than was her habit, if she refused positively to sit with her back to any door or to retire for the night until her stateroom had been examined, if (as Lanyard suspected) she was never unarmed for a moment of the day or night, she permitted no signs of mental strain to mar the serenity of her countenance or betray the studied graciousness of her gestures.

Toward Lanyard she bore herself precisely as though nothing had happened to disturb the even adjustment of their personal relations; or, perhaps, as if she considered everything had happened, so that their *rapport* had become absolute; at all events, with a pleasing absence of embarrassment. He really couldn't make her out.

But he never for an instant imagined she was meekly accepting defeat at his hands instead of biding her time to resume the attack from a new quarter. So he wasn't at all surprised when, one evening, quite early after dinner, she contrived another *tête-à-tête*, and with good conversational generalship led their talk presently into a channel of amiable personalities.

"And have you been thinking about what I said, my friend—three nights ago?"

"But inevitably, Liane."

"You have not forgotten my stupidity, then?"

"I have forgotten nothing."

She made a pretty



"As long as I'm master of this vessel, I'll sail her according to the counsels of my own discretion."



A moment later the lights came on, and Lanyard went below. His bewildered gaze discovered

mouth of doubt. "Would it not have been more kind to forget?"

"Such compliments are not easily forgotten."

"You are sure, quite sure it was a compliment?"

"No-o; by no means sure. Still, I am a man, and I am giving you the full benefit of every doubt."

She laughed, not ill-pleased. "But what a man! how blessed of the gods to be able to laugh at yourself as well as at me."

"Undeceive yourself; I could never laugh at you, Liane. Even if one did not believe you to be a great natural *comédienne* at will, one would always wonder what your purpose was. O yes! with deep respect one would wonder about that."

"And you have been wondering these last three days? Well, tell me what you think my purpose was in abandoning all maidenly reserve and throwing myself at your head."

"Why," said Lanyard with a look of childlike candor, "you might, you know, have been uncontrollably swayed by some passionate impulse of the heart."

"But otherwise?" she asked, hugely amused.

"Oh, if you had a low motive in trying to make a fool of me, you know too well how to hide your motive from such a fool."

In a fugitive seizure of thoughtfulness the violet eyes lost all their impishness. She sighed, the bright head drooped a little toward the gleaming bosom, a hand stole out to rest lightly upon his once again.

"It was not acting, Michael—I tell you that frankly—at least, not all acting."

"Meaning, I take it, you know love too well to make it artlessly."

"I'm afraid so, my dear," said Liane Delorme with another sigh. "You know, I am afraid of you. You see everything so clearly . . ."

"It's a vast pity. I wish I could outgrow it. One misses so many amusing emotions when one sees too clearly."

During another brief pause, Lanyard saw Monk come on deck, pause, and search them out in the chairs they occupied near the taffrail, much as on that other historic night. Not that he experienced any difficulty in locating them; for this time the deck-lights were burning clearly. Nevertheless, Captain Monk confessed emotion at sight of those two in a very perceptible start, and Lanyard saw the eyebrows tremendously agitated as their manipulator moved aft.

Unconscious of all this, Liane ended her pensive moment by leaning toward Lanyard, and making demoralizing eyes, while the hand left his and stole with a caressing gesture up his forearm.

"Is love, then, distasteful to you unless it be truly artless, Michael?"

"There's so much to be said about that, Liane," he evaded. Monk was standing over them, a towering figure in white with the most forbidding eyebrows Lanyard had ever seen.

"Might one suggest," he did suggest in iced accents, "that



Liane Delorme, drawn up rigidly against the starboard partition near her stateroom door.

the quarter-deck is a fairly conspicuous place for this exhibition of family affection?"

Liane Delorme turned up an inquiring look, tinged slightly with an impatience which all at once proved too much for her.

"Oh, go to the devil!" she snapped in that harsh voice of the sidewalks which she was able to use and discard at will.

For a moment Monk made no reply; and Lanyard remarked a curious quivering of that excessively tall, excessively attenuated body, a real trembling, and suddenly understood that the absurd creature was being racked by jealousy, by an enormous passion of jealousy, quite beyond his control, that shook him very much as a cat might shake a mouse.

It was too funny to be laughable, it was comic in a way to make one want to weep. So that Lanyard, who refused to weep in public, could merely gape in speechless and transfixed rapture. And perhaps this was fortunate; otherwise Monk must have seen that his idiotic secret was out, the sport of ribald mirth, and the situation would have been precipitated with a vengeance and an outcome impossible to predict. As it was, absorbed in his inner torment, Monk was insensible to the peril that threatened his stilted but precious dignity, which he proceeded to parade, as it were underlining it with the eyebrows, to lend stress to his words.

"So long as this entertaining fiction of brother-and-sister is thought worth while," Monk said with infuriated condescension, "it might be judicious not to indulge in inconsistent and un-

seemly demonstrations within view of my officers and men. Suppose we . . ." He choked a little. "In short, I came to find and invite you to a little conference in my rooms, with Mr. Phinuit."

"Conference?" Liane inquired coolly, without stirring. "I know nothing of this conference."

"Mr. Phinuit and I are agreed that Monsieur Lanyard is entitled to know more about our intentions while he has time to weigh them carefully. We have only four more days at sea . . ."

Unable longer to contain himself, Lanyard left his chair with alacrity. "But this is so delightful! You've no idea, really, *monsieur*, how I have looked forward to this moment!" And to Liane: "Do come, and see how I take it, this revelation of my preordained fate. It will be, I trust sincerely, like a man!"

With momentary hesitation, and in a temper precluding any sympathy with his humor, the woman rose and in silence followed with him that long-legged figure whose stalk held so much dramatic significance as he led to the companionway.

After that it was refreshing to find unromantic Mr. Phinuit lounging beside the captain's desk with crossed feet overhanging one corner of it and mind intent on the prosaic business of paring his finger-nails. Lanyard nodded to him with great good temper and—while Phinuit lowered his feet and put away his penknife—considerately placed a chair for Liane in the position in which she preferred to sit, with her face turned a little from the light.

Nor would his appreciation of the formality which seemed demanded by Monk's solemn manner, permit him to sit before the captain had taken his own chair behind the desk.

Then, however, he discovered the engaging spontaneity of a schoolboy at a pantomime, and drawing up a chair sat on the edge of it and addressed himself with unaffected eagerness to the most portentous eyebrows in captivity.

"Now," he announced, with a little bow, "for what, one imagines, Mr. Phinuit would term the Elaborate Idea!"

XXIV

HISTORIC REPETITION

PHINUIT grinned, then smothered a little yawn. Liane Delorme gave a small, disdainful movement of shoulders, and posed herself becomingly, crossing her knees, resting an elbow on the arm of her chair and inclining her cheek upon two fingers of a jeweled hand. Thus she sat somewhat turned from Monk and Phinuit, but facing Lanyard, to whom her grave but friendly eyes gave undivided heed, for all the world as if there were no others present: she seemed to wait to hear him speak again rather than to care in the least about what Monk would find to say.

Captain Monk filled in that slight pause with an impressive arrangement of eyebrows. Then, fixing his gaze, not upon Lanyard, but upon the point of a pencil with which his incredibly thin fingers traced elaborate but empty designs upon the blotter, he opened his lips, h'mmed in warning that he was about to speak, and seemed tremendously upset to find that Liane was inconsiderately forestalling him.

Her voice was at its most musical pitch, rather low for her, fluting, infinitely disarming and seductive.

"Let me say to you, *mon ami*, that—naturally I know what is coming—I disapprove absolutely of this method of treating with you."

"But it is such an honor to be considered important enough to be treated with at all!"

"You have the true gift for sarcasm: a pity to waste it on an audience two-thirds incapable of appreciation."

"Oh, you're wrong!" Phinuit declared earnestly. "I'm appreciative, I think the dear man's immense."

"Might I suggest?"—the unctuous tones of Captain Monk issued from under mildly wounded eyebrows—"if any one of us were unappreciative of Monsieur Lanyard's undoubted talents, he would not be with us to-night?"

"You might suggest it," Phinuit assented, "but that wouldn't make it so. It is to *mademoiselle's* appreciation that you and I owe this treat, and you know it. Now quit cocking those automatic eyebrows at me; you've been doing that ever since we met, and they haven't gone off yet, not once!"

Irrepressible, Liane's laughter pealed, and though he couldn't help smiling, Lanyard hastened to offer up himself on the altar of peace.

"But—*messieurs*—you interest me so much. Won't you tell me quickly what possible value my poor talents can have found in your sight?"

"You tell him, Monk," Phinuit said irreverently, "I'm no tale-bearer."

Monk elevated his eyebrows above recognition of the impertinence, and offered Lanyard a bow of formidable courtesy.

"They are such, *monsieur*," he said with that deliberation which becomes a diplomatic personage, "your talents are such that you can, if you will, become invaluable to us."

Phinuit chuckled outright at Lanyard's look of polite obtuseness.

"Never sail a straight course—can you, skipper?—when you can get there by tacking! Here! I'm a plain-spoken guy, let me act as interpreter. Mr. Lanyard, this giddy association of malefactors here present has the honor to invite you to become a full-fledged, working member and stockholder of equal interest with the rest of us, participating in all benefits of the organization, including police protection. And as an added inducement, we're willing to waive initiation fee and dues. Do I make myself clear?"

"Perfectly!"

"It's like this: I've told you how we came together, the five of us, including Jules and Monsieur le Comte de Lorgnes. Now we expect this venture, our first, to pan out handsomely. There'll be a juicy melon cut when we get to New York. There's a lot more—I think you understand—than the Montalais plunder to whack up on. We'll make the average get-rich-quick scheme look like playing store in the backyard with two pins the top

price for anything on the shelves. And there isn't any sane reason why we need stop at that. In fact, we don't mean to. The *Sybarite* will make more voyages, and if anything should happen to prevent it, there are other means of making the U. S. Customs look foolish. Each of us contributes valuable and essential services, *mademoiselle*, the skipper, my kid-brother, even I—and I pull a strong oar with the New York Police Department into the bargain. But there's a vacancy in our ranks, the opening left by the death of de Lorgnes, an opening that nobody could hope to fill so well as you. So we put it up to you squarely: If you'll sign on and work with us, we'll turn over to you a round fifth share of the profits of this voyage as well as everything that comes after. That's fair enough, isn't it?"

"But more than fair, *monsieur*."

"Well, it's true you've done nothing to earn a fifth interest in the first division of profits. . . ."

"Then, too, I am here, quite helpless in your hands."

"Oh, we don't look at it that way—"

"Which," Liane sweetly interrupted, "is the one rational gesture you have yet offered in this conference, Monsieur Phinuit."

"Meaning, I suppose, Mr. Lanyard is far from being what he says, helpless in our hands."

"Nor ever will be, my poor friend, while he breathes and thinks!"

"But, Liane!" Lanyard deprecated, modestly casting down his eyes, "you overwhelm me."

"I don't believe you," Liane retorted coolly.

For some moments Lanyard continued to stare reflectively at his feet. Nothing whatever of his thought was to be gathered from his countenance, though eyes more shrewd to read than those of Phinuit or Monk were watching it intently.

"Well, Mr. Lanyard, what do you say?"

Lanyard lifted his meditative gaze to the face of Phinuit.

"But surely there is more . . ." he suggested in a puzzled way.

"More what?"

"I find something lacking . . . You have shown me only one side of the coin. What is the reverse? I appreciate the honor you do me, I comprehend fully the strong inducements I am offered. But you have neglected—an odd oversight on the part of the plain-spoken man you profess to be—you have forgotten to name the penalty which would attach to a possible refusal."

"I guess it's safe to leave that to your imagination."

"There would be a penalty, however?"

"Well, naturally, if you're not with us, you're against us. And to take that stand would oblige us, as a simple matter of self-preservation, to protect ourselves with every means at our command."

"Means which," Lanyard murmured, "you prefer not to name."

"Well, one doesn't like to be crude."

"I have my answer, *monsieur*—and many thanks. The parallel is complete."

With a dim smile playing in his eyes and twitching at the corners of his lips, Lanyard leaned back and studied the deck beams. Liane Delorme sat up with a movement of sharp uneasiness.

"Of what, my friend, are you thinking?"

"I am marveling at something everyone knows—that history does repeat itself."

The woman made a sudden hissing sound, of breath drawn shortly between closed teeth. "I hope not!" she sighed.

Lanyard opened his eyes wide at her. "You hope not, Liane?"

"I hope this time history will not altogether repeat itself. You see, my friend, I think I know what is in your mind, memories of old times. . . ."

"True: I am thinking of those days when the Pack hunted the Lone Wolf in Paris, ran him to earth at last, and made him much the same offer as you have made to-night. . . . The Pack, you should know, *messieurs*, was the name assumed by an association of Parisian criminals, ambitious like you, who had grown envious of the Lone Wolf's success, and wished to persuade him to run with them."

"And what happened?" Phinuit inquired.

"Why, it so happened that they chose the time when I had made up my mind to be good for the rest of my days. It was all most unfortunate."

"What answer did you give them, then?"

"As memory serves, I told them they could all go plumb to hell."

"So I hope history will not repeat, this time," Liane interjected.

(Continued on page 121)

What Is Your Vanity?

Photographic illustrations by

Lejaren A. Hiller



*If you are like most of us—says
Fred C. Kelly—you have the
“drum-major” impulse to make
people look at you. Have you
ever thought how you do it?*

NEARLY every boy has at some time been ambitious to grow up and become a drum-major. Who hasn't yearned to march at the head of parades in gay trappings, with bands playing and everybody looking at him? Many men—and women—have never recovered from this drum-major impulse. An astonishingly large number of us are drum-majors at heart, always ready to stand in the center of a group photograph, or, at any rate, glad to be pointed out in a crowd. Think of the absurd clothes we wear, the fashions we follow, the weird whiskers we raise, and the needlessly big houses we build—all because of our desire to make people look!

In other words, we humans are really ridiculous creatures. Our vanities make us funny, but they also make us take ourselves so seriously that we don't always see how funny we are. I am convinced that our craving for superiority, our constant search for a chance to strut, plays a more important part in human affairs than people generally appreciate. Indeed, it sometimes appears to be nip and tuck between vanity and the instinct for self-preservation. All our daily doings are surprisingly mixed up with our personal vanities.

You and I have our vanities, and we know we have them. But we don't always realize just what and why they are. So it seems to me that it might be a good idea to sit down and mull over this whole vanity proposition, with a view to making it possible to see ourselves somewhat as others see us. Many little vanities are so common, or so involved, that we do not recognize them as such. Why can't we have a frank discussion and a general swapping of symptoms that appear in each other? I believe that a better understanding of the everyday phases of our show-off instincts will help to explain many little questions that have been mysteries in our social, financial, political, business and domestic relations.

This article, then, is going to be entirely about you and me. Maybe we have been making utter asses of ourselves without ever pausing to think about it.

We must not be too easily fooled by minor characteristics of

people we meet. Not every person is as modest as he appears to be. I recall a man who rarely has much to say, and most people imagine that he is a shrinking violet.

But he is quiet because he usually feels himself above the crowd and doesn't wish to waste his conversation.

One man may be vain about having clothes that are costly and showy; another may purposely wear garments that are downright shabby. And perhaps the shabby man is the more vain of the two. He thinks he is a person of such great consequence that he can dress any way he sees fit—that his mussy-looking clothes are merely, as the saying is, a small mortgage on a large estate.

A portrait painter friend of mine tells me, that while a man may not object to being portrayed in his old clothes, he is disappointed if his head isn't at an angle that makes him look rather smart and shrewd.

And this is also often true: There are men who would actually wear diamond rings if it weren't that they are ashamed of having such a vanity known. A man who really craves a ring may never buy one—because that would be too frank an admission of his weakness. But if he receives one as a gift he will publicly wear it.

I happen to know two playwrights who also may serve as examples. On an opening night, one of these may invariably be seen in the theater lobby all giggled up like a society dowager, so that everybody is sure to notice him and inquire who he is. The other always looks as conservative as the average church sexton, and would not be noticed in a crowd no matter how small the crowd might be—but he likes to take a seat in the audience unrecognized and listen to the comments people make on his play. He is just as much thrilled over admiration bestowed on his work as the other man is over the attention directed at his actual self.



People who pay the extra price for a box seat do not do so to see better, but to be seen better.

There is a certain member of a very important committee of the national House of Representatives whose vanity takes the form of a mania for being in the center of group photographs and being generally too much in evidence at every opportunity. Yet in regard to his abilities he is fairly modest. That his mentality is of a low order and that he is a hopeless vulgarian, he might, in strict confidence, be willing to admit.

A boy wearing his first pair of long trousers or a man wheeling twins is self-conscious not because of his modesty, but owing to his vanity. He thinks everybody is staring at him, even though, as a matter of fact, the chances are that nobody has given him a second thought.

The woman who runs to a doctor for every trivial ill is likely to be a vain woman—thinking that every little hangnail that goes awry on *her* is a matter of great moment.

Here is another example of a quiet, modest-appearing person who is, nevertheless, inordinately vain: Old Bill Horner ran a small feed store in our town, and was as retiring and inoffensive a chap as one could imagine. I don't suppose he ever did anything wrong in his life. He didn't have enough animation or imagination to carry out much wrong-doing. Yet, every time there was a revival in town, he used to get up and boast about his past sins. There are a surprisingly large number of persons in all walks of life who secretly would love to brag about their wickedness. Nine men out of ten want people to believe that they were full of mischievous pranks when they went to school, and I am well acquainted with a woman who grew infuriated once upon a time, when she learned that another woman had referred to her as "a dear, good woman." She wished it to be understood that she is not without a reasonable amount of devilry in her make-up. We are all a little like that. It is our way of strutting as drum-majors.

Even so simple a matter as going to the theater may reveal to us how much our daily motives are based on vanity. Do we sit in the balcony, which we secretly regard as plenty good enough, or do we buy an orchestra seat, for fear somebody we know might

see us in the balcony and think we couldn't afford the orchestra? Or do we prefer a box seat? It is of scant consequence whether anybody in a theater box can see the stage or not, because that is not the purpose of a box. People who pay the extra price necessary for a box seat do so not to see but to be seen. They get part of their money's worth from the satisfaction of feeling superior to those in the cheaper seats—even though the cheaper seats are more comfortable. If a totally unknown man sits in a box, he hopes that the rest of the audience is wondering if he isn't perhaps an ambassador.

Does your wife wear much jewelry? If so did you ever think of this: Most wearing of jewelry by women is due not only to vanity but to one of the worst of motives—the desire to make other women envious, therefore more or less discontented, and, consequently, unhappy. Not every individual woman who wears jewelry has this in mind, of course, but the fact remains that the main purpose of

jewelry is to excite envy. A diamond ring on a woman is a trophy. It is worn to show her prowess just as surely as a row of scalps was intended to exhibit the prowess of an Indian warrior. A costly ring or pendant indicates that the woman wearing it is in some way associated with money—with buy-

ing power. Either she was born to money—"to the menu born," as O. Henry used to say—or else she exerted her feminine charm and attracted a mate with enough money to buy her unnecessary adornments.

Therefore, she may feel superior to those women who have not the purchasing power to wear a ring containing a diamond as large or as costly as hers.

Almost any woman wearing many jewels is certain to insist that she wears them solely because of their

beauty. But that is only an alibi. If beauty were the only reason, she could buy synthetic gems for only a fraction of the cost of the genuine article.

"Ah," I heard a woman retort to this argument, "but I don't want that which isn't genuine. I want the *real*—the article that is what it pretends to be."

That sounds all right, but let's see if it is true. Suppose that scientists were able to manufacture artificial diamonds vastly more sparkling and more beautiful than any ever taken from the mines. But suppose, also, that the cost of manufacture was so high that a synthetic gem cost about eight times as much as the best grade of natural diamonds. I leave it to any logically-minded person to guess what would happen.

I know a man who had lived all his life in a small humble home which was adequate for his needs, but recently he built a house of sixty-one rooms. Such a large house is, of course, a nuisance to him, but his reason is to make people look at the house and inquire who lives there—in other words, to make his presence felt in the community. Another man I have in mind is able to satisfy this craving to be looked up to merely by buying an overcoat with a fur collar and a suit of clothes of loud pattern. A few people still employ two men to occupy the front seat when they go automobiling, one to act as chauffeur and drive the car, and the other to wear livery and show to the world his employer's ability to hire somebody to devote himself to being entirely useless. The extra man is a human symbol that his boss can afford to be wasteful.

Most styles in dress are based on exactly the same idea as expensive jewelry or a needlessly large house—the desire to show superiority. People wish to be in style to prove that they are able to buy that which is costly—and also to call attention to their knowledge of that which is the proper thing.

A person will pay more for a book which is one of a numbered edition of only two hundred copies than for a copy in equally good binding, with the same contents, sold by the thousands, because we crave something that everybody can't have. A surprisingly

large number of us will actually pay ten times what an article is worth, just to prevent a neighbor from having one like it. The minute a woman gets an expensive gown, she is distressed over the possibility that a certain one of her neighbors—whom she regards as inferior—may have one just as satisfying. She must, therefore, sooner or later discard the gown and buy a new one at a price beyond the reach of her neighbor, so that the latter may be brought to realize her own somewhat humbler status. This desire to anticipate seasonable styles and show one's ability to be up-to-date has brought about such competition among women that we have long had such silly exhibitions as wearing straw hats in winter and furs in mid-summer.

Years ago when velvet was a novelty and so expensive that it was worn chiefly by royalty, there was a French queen who appeared at a *fête* in a velvet gown by means of which she had joyfully expected to make all other women present grossly dissatisfied with their own apparel. But several other women had saved and contrived and bought themselves becoming outfits also of velvet. The queen took one look at this vulgar display of affluence and turned on her heel in disgust, exclaiming peevishly: "I thought I was the queen!" Seeing those other women dressed nearly as well as she was practically spoiled her day.

Charles IX, in 1567 I believe it was, permitted silk only to princesses and duchesses, advancing as a reason that he wished to limit foreign goods and encourage home industries. But the truth was that he had been prevailed upon to take this action by the princesses and duchesses themselves. They feared that unless something was done to prevent others from dressing like them, it might gradually become less and less of a social achievement to be a high-born lady. Their attitude was really much the same as that of the woman you hear say: "I can't wear that suit again. Irra, our maid, has one almost exactly the same color."

In a sense, the fewer frills a woman has on the better she looks. The simple things are the most attractive in the long run. A professional nurse nearly always looks prettier in her inexpensive nursing outfit than when she is dressed in more costly garb. But women who set the fashions will not have simple things unless designed by high-priced persons whose work is not easily imitated.

As soon as the fashion leaders take up a certain style, others among us not capable of setting the fashions fall right into line, to show that we're just as good as the leaders. If we can't all be drum-majors we may at least march in the parade. Nearly every change of fashion is founded on this competition between the people leading the procession and those trailing along behind.

This unthinking emulation in dress was illustrated in an amusing way a few years ago during the Cleveland administration. A number of Washington newspaper men, just as a practical joke, concocted a story, which they wired broadcast, that Mrs. Cleveland was going to abandon the bustle. According to the account, the First Lady of the Land had that day had a gown designed by a fashionable *modiste* which did not provide for a bustle. That faked news-item changed the fashions of the day, and so far as my information goes, the bustle has not been worn since.

Why does a man wear a dress suit and silk hat? Because this equipment, with the spotless white shirt front, is the symbol to the world that the man is not, for the time being, usefully engaged, and therefore is obviously able to buy a certain amount of leisure. As a matter of fact, nearly every man worthy of the name dislikes wearing a dress suit. He realizes that it is a prescribed uniform of preposterous design, undemocratic, and generally nonsensical, but he wears it on occasion rather than have anybody think he does not own one. He wishes to show the world that he is just as good as some other fellow who openly maintains a dress suit.



While a man may not object to having his portrait painted in his old clothes, he is disappointed if his head isn't at an angle that makes him look rather smart.

Human beings have long been willing even to deform themselves in order to appear unusual or more important, and make people look. Tattooing in certain tribes once had a great vogue, for exactly the same reason that modern women wear bright plumage on their hats, or that prompted Indians to daub gay colors on their faces. Other savage people have deformed their lips, worn rings in their noses, or changed the shapes of their heads into what they regarded as a more nobby contour. And American women used to pierce the lobes of their ears for earrings, with a barbaric notion that such practise was necessary to social advancement.

The tight-laced corsets and wasp-waists of former years are often cited as examples of feminine vanity. But, paradoxically, the wearing of tight corsets by women was originally due, not to the vanity of women but to the vanity of men. The demand for a small waist-line was a hangover from the days when a woman was purely a chattel and was considered a luxury somewhat in proportion to her helplessness. A thin waist suggested the clinging vine and the idea of being ornamental rather than useful. It was even considered smart to be a semi-invalid. That may have been the reason why, in more recent times, unnecessary operations at the hands of society surgeons came more and more into vogue. You see, a weak, helpless wife added to the standing of her husband—on the theory that anybody can afford a wife strong enough to earn her own upkeep—but to maintain a wife obviously too thin and weak to perform useful tasks branded her husband as a person able to indulge himself with the luxuries of life. An unnecessary article always carries more social prestige than a necessary one. For example, the fellow who owns a limousine is looked upon as of a higher social order than the one who has merely a delivery truck. At any rate, inasmuch as a thin wife was the kind most in demand by the more important and vainer men of the tribe, women sought to be as thin and helpless-looking as they could. Women who were not quite so thin began to lace themselves in imitation of those who were.

The same explanation goes for high-heeled shoes and feet deformed after the Chinese fashion. A woman with high heels, or otherwise obliged to walk with mincing steps, is obviously not a working woman, not engaged in useful toil, and this appeals to her husband's vanity.

Even yet a vast number of women are vain over the fact that their daughters are untrained to do anything useful. They regard this as ample evidence of gentle birth. And until the war made useful jobs for married women respectable, every husband preferred to have his wife idle, though bored, rather than profitably employed, lest somebody should think that maybe she *had* to work—that he couldn't support her. You see, it was his vanity, not hers, that kept her idle.

Men and women, despairing of being conspicuous enough themselves, long ago hit on the plan of attracting attention vicariously—by making people look at their horses or dogs. Every day we see men and women leading foolish, anemic, inutile little dogs for the purpose of making people turn their heads. The idea of trimming dogs' ears, shortening their tails, and docking the tails of horses, all originated in a desire to make people look. A dog's ears are trimmed, not for the purpose of gaining in beauty or symmetry but to conform to an arbitrary standard of excellence originally set up by somebody who wished to be unusual. We trim the ears of a bulldog, but not of an Airedale or spaniel. Yet the ears of a spaniel are so large that they are in his way. If changing the ears or the tail of a dog really worked an improvement the plan would have been applied to all breeds. But it is purely a matter of following the lead of somebody who originally set the pace—of trying to show the owner of a dog with half-cocked ears, just as we would show the possessor of a wife with diamond earrings, that we are just as good as he is.

A man's particular brand of vanity often shows in his clothes. The early Puritans were extremely cocky about their simplicity. They disliked the Cavaliers who wore their hair long, and so they

wore *their* hair short, in order to exhibit their superiority to the Cavaliers. To-day there are plenty of persons who would be insulted if regarded as fashionable but who are proud of the fact that their dress is so plain as to be almost uncouth. So-called free thinkers may usually be recognized by their dress. Likewise, artists and musicians are likely to have a distinctive garb. The best artists usually dress like other people, but the fellow not well enough known to be recognized as a successful artist is inclined to dress according to the popular notion of how an artist should look.

When children play school, each one wants to be the teacher and *tell* the others. If you ask a bystander a road direction, he is likely to go into such detail that he becomes a nuisance, so glad is he to impart information. The man who has discovered a new *table d'hôte* restaurant seems to get no little pleasure from passing the knowledge on to his friends.

Why was it that when automobiles first came into use, people who rode in them invariably were done up in veils and goggles and special dusters and accoutrements as elaborate as if they were starting on a trip of Martian exploration? Simply because it was unusual to own an automobile at first, and those who rode in them desired to impress the innocent bystander with the fact that they were doing something rather superior. They wished to make automobiling appear more difficult than it really was—just as the man playing the cornet in a country band makes more wry faces than he needs to, in order to make his job look "hard."

Men who join lodges and exclusive clubs do so largely in hope of being able to show superiority. They like to go to places where the general run of their fellow townsmen are not admitted. And nearly every man who associates himself with a lodge nurtures an ambition to become the Grand Exalted Chief and have other men come in and salute him.

The vanity of ancestry takes a curious turn. People are proud of having ancestors who were socially prominent, yet we know that social prominence is usually based on the possession of wealth, and wealth means leisure and idleness, and idleness in turn means mischief, which often includes inebriety, or even disease, handed down to future generations. Nevertheless, people are inclined to be more proud of ancestors who were socially prominent than of those who were merely hardworking, clean-limbed, healthy peasants.

Many a man is out of pocket because his vanity gives him a craving for a title. He is in reality, let us say, a bookkeeper, but his employer, not wishing to raise his salary, calls him the General Auditor, and this satisfies him as well as if he were getting more money in his pay envelop. I can't recall when I've heard of a girl actually being a stenographer. She is always a secretary or an assistant to somebody. It used to be that corporations had one president and one vice-president. Now they have a dozen vice-presidents in order to spread around the titles, and just lately I have noticed that the *Assistant Vice-president* has arrived.

When a person commits murder or goes crazy, it is likely to be on account of some form of vanity. The murderer usually kills for revenge, to even up things with somebody who has won away his sweetheart, or otherwise trampled on his pride. And the asylums are filled with people who have become unbalanced from believing that they are greater than they really are. Nearly every insane man thinks he is an emperor, a millionaire, a great inventor, or that he has been wronged—that he is entitled to something he hasn't got, that people are conspiring against him.

Vanity is nearly always coupled with intolerance. A man is intolerant because he sees no need of getting the opinions of others.

We are all vain by proxy—and desire to be noticed even in death. Else why would there be so many altogether needless and unlovely monuments in cemeteries? One of the ancient prophets has been quoted as observing: "All is vanity." And sometimes I am inclined to believe that perhaps he was more than half right. We all want to be dram-majors.

Do You—

Wear "distinctive" clothes?

Like to be photographed?

Talk about your "wickedness?"

Own—and wear—costly jewelry?

Want to live in a big house?

Indulge yourself in doctors and medicines?

Trim your dog's ears?

Express pride in your ancestors?

Prefer theater boxes to orchestra chairs?

Cherish a desire for a title?

The Good Little Bathing Girl

A Love Story of the Movies

Illustrations by

Thornton D. Skidmore

HOW THIS STORY CAME TO BE WRITTEN:

Some of the best stories come from real life. Here is one. Frank R. Adams, the author of it, was crossing the Continent by automobile when he stumbled upon its big scene. He was traveling alone, except for his Chow puppy, H'wang. One night at "supper"—served by the selfsame "Sneed" of this story—at a ramshackle old hotel in an almost-deserted Nevada foothill hamlet, he overheard the conversation between "Allis" and "Swift" that is recorded here. "Clark Jennings" was a solitary diner in a corner. Mr. Adams's curiosity aroused his story-teller's imagination. Several weeks spent at the motion-picture studios in Los Angeles—and out of it all came this story.

CLARK JENNINGS did not by any means imply that she was the only one. He was merely sure that a chemical test would rate her at least as high as certain well-advertised soap. That, too, in a profession where it is popularly supposed to be easy to find by-paths to Avernus.

His attention had first been attracted to her famous profile by a newspaper cut announcing her as the winner of a beauty contest. Along with the rest of us, Clark was inclined to view the winner of beauty contests with tolerant pity. But Ann Bugg wore her beauty with a sweetness that was not lost entirely, even in the posed photograph which showed her with the light filtering through her hair in the halo-fashion made popular several years ago by shampoo advertisements. She gave the impression that some one must have sent in her picture without her knowledge, a picture that had been snapped when she was intensely interested in something else. Her parted lips abetted this deduction. With a little imagination, which Clark had, you could almost see her girlish bosom rise and fall. She seemed to be asking, "Why did you make me love you?" and waiting with muffled heart-beats for the reassurance of your reply.

That picture faded into the extreme background of his memory and he thought of her not at all until about a year later he ran across an extremely frank photograph of the bathing beauties of a famous series of motion picture comedies. She was there in a wisp of black silk which must be left to the imagination. To describe it would sound too intimate. The caption proclaimed her name as Allis Reveur, but a swift search of his engraved thought channels turned up the label, Ann Bugg. He remembered it because it had fitted so badly. So now she was an ornament to the screen.

But her expression was still arrestingly pleasant and unspoiled. Clark paused to marvel a moment before he turned the magazine

She seemed to be asking, "Why did you make me love you?" and waiting with muffled heart-beats for your reply.

page which she graced. Later he went back and tore out the picture.

Now the reason why Clark Jennings did a thing like that is a complete index to his character. He was a shy sort of a chap who had not had enough dealings with the contrary gender to realize that they are not so dangerous as they look. He had been that way all through two universities and one war. Afterwards, when his father got the contract for the Revera dam and reservoir and put Clark in charge of the construction, the enforced solitude of his job had not tended to make him more of a



T. D. SKIDMORE —

The Good Little Bathing Girl

mixer. For three years he practically lived in the desert with an everchanging gang of laborers.

Women came through in automobiles, stopped sometimes for meals or for the night at the Palm Tree Inn where he himself boarded but, naturally, they paid no attention to the young man who dined by himself way over in the corner back of the door. Nor did he notice them particularly. The mere fact that a person belonged to the opposite sex interested Clark not at all. To arrest his attention a girl would have to flag him by some other means.

He was moderately good looking, not large nor especially powerful but with a nice skin and an expression of being willing to please if anyone would meet him half-way. He dressed just about the same as everybody else thereabouts—a flannel shirt and old army breeches in high laced boots, so that unless you looked closely and with particular attention to his eyes you would never guess that he was boss of a hundred men and quite a large number of mules.

At the Sunline Studios, Allis Reveur was the girl who always got next-to-the-best position in the shots. Often Director Hutton would have been glad to use her for a little individual stuff, or for a close-up, but of course that was out of the question. Petite Bremer wouldn't stand for it. But she did tolerate Allis in second place with a good grace, because Allis was no vamp and a girl was moderately safe in leaving her sweetie alone with her. Allis's lack of speed was a joke to everybody around the studio except Pet. To Pet it was a protection.

Perhaps that was why Pet had Allis in to dress with her. She had the best room and, if there was any choice of costumes, the prettiest ones unobtrusively gravitated to that particular compartment.

Allis came in late. It must have been late, because Pet was already there and she was never known to be on time in the history of the studio. One must be very beautiful to get away with this.

Pet had a visitor.

"Allis," she said, "meet Sylvia Samson."

Miss Samson was a woman somewhat beyond girlhood in figure and face, who nevertheless made a shabby pretense of girlishness in dress and manner. The glories of once golden hair had obviously been prolonged by bleach, and even the floppy-brimmed black hat did not entirely soften the lines of the slightly hard face. Her suit was not quite smart—it bore traces of having been altered to the current mode from something quite different and much older.

"How do you do?" Allis shook hands pleasantly. "Of course your name is familiar but—"

"I was the star of 'Veracity,'" the visitor reminded and then added bitterly, "but don't look incredulous, because it only hurts my feelings and I'm so down and out I can't stand much more."

"I wasn't looking incredulous," Allis defended, and with ready sympathy continued, "I wouldn't hurt you for worlds. Besides I never saw 'Veracity.'"

"Are you as young as that?" the woman mused, "or am I so old? In its day 'Veracity' was a beautiful picture and I was beautiful in it. I was dressed just as you are now," Allis had peeled down to her rose-leaf skin, "except that I wore my hair, which was gold then, parted and hanging down over either shoulder nearly to my knees. I used to carry one of the 'stills' of myself in my handbag but once a man saw it and laughed. I tore it up."

The visitor subsided into a jaundiced reverie and the two girls, who had no adequate consolation to offer, left her alone while they slipped into a couple of economical-appearing costumes which probably cost a hundred dollars per square inch, making the total expense for both around six hundred bucks.

Allis's figure was just enough different from that of a young boy or a Greek god to be unmistakably feminine. Otherwise she was almost straight and slim, and she wore clothes or nothing with an unabashed charm that was truly pagan and innocent. Her eyes and her lips had not yet learned world wisdom nor deceit, in spite of the fact that she lived in the midst of a fast current of life. Her hair was bronze gold, warm enough to give the lie to the cool pallor of her skin. Her hair was the only thing about her that made Petite Bremer occasionally wonder if she dared to trust her absolutely.

"You were a little late to-day," Pet reminded Allis, more to fill in the painful pause than because it made any difference. "I suppose your Rolls-Royce had an attack of cramp or colic on the corner of Main and—"

"No, child," Allis interrupted, "but I was in a Moonbeam roadster at that."

"Allis," reprovingly, "don't you know that good little bathing girls don't go riding with strange young men, or even old ones, in their expensive cars?"

"This wasn't a strange young man," Allis remonstrated, moving a silk and jeweled garter to slightly different position where it looked just a little naughtier. "And the reason it took so long to get rid of him was because of a ring he had with him and which he insisted upon my seeing and keeping."

"Did you?" Both the other women concurred in the question.

"Well," Allis slowly admitted, "I had to agree to keep it just for to-day or I'd never have got here. I'm going to give it back to him to-night."

"Ha!" Sylvia laughed.

Pet checked her. "Don't laugh. Allis means it. She's that kind of a nut."

"Let's see the ring," the one-time beauty asked.

"It's nothing much," Allis demurred.

"Give it the air anyway," urged Pet.

"All right." It was in the garter and Allis reluctantly aroused it from its soft, silken repose.

"So," accused Pet, "you call that 'nothing much!' Were you by any chance born in a diamond mine so that the sparkle of those things doesn't hurt your eyes?"

"It's worth a fortune," gloated the visitor, almost a greedy note in her admiration.

"As plate-glass goes now, yes," agreed Pet. "I tried to get my darling to come across with one about half that size last month and when he told me the price I let him off, not being, so to speak, an absolutely heartless pirate."

"You could get five hundred on it in any pawn-shop in the world," suggested Sylvia practically.

"Oh, I'm not going to keep it," Allis explained. "I don't see how I could."

The visitor sniffed. "Don't be foolish. He may want to marry you but whether he does or not—"

"Allis is no salamander," Pet defended. "She's in the movies for just the same reason that she might be scrubbing floors all day. There's no mad passion for publicity or admiration about it. She wants the kale. There's a sick brother or something in the background, just like in 'Della, the Doughnut Designer's Model.'"

"In that case," continued Sylvia, "she'd better grab off any diamond rings that may be passed around. They'll come in handy some day when she ain't so beautiful. This is from the heart out and I'm telling you as one which was once beautiful. If some one man cares for you and you care enough for him to cut out everything else, then it's all right; otherwise you've got to take a little bit here and there from each one that comes along or some day you'll get to be like me. Which brings me to the real reason for coming to visit. Could either of you girls spare five dollars until Saturday?"

Allis met Dukane Swift by appointment that evening. By prearrangement he fed her first. All during the meal the girl found herself appraising him—wondering just how much she valued his society, his admiration.

"Duke" certainly was a clean-looking young man and his clothes were impeccable. He had interesting eyes and a generous mouth—too generous perhaps, and rather red for a man. He talked well and almost continuously. Allis had sometimes found his conversation a dangerous anaesthetic which dulled her to the peril of his frank admiration.

One thing about him both attracted and repelled her. It was his confidence in himself. No human being had any justification for being so sure of success as every attitude, every gesture of Dukane Swift proclaimed him to be. He stood squarely upon his feet and leaned slightly forward with his jaw just a little in front of all the rest of his face. And he talked the way he stood and looked. Men with that kind of a front are either solid iron or else highly compressed and heated pneumatic-tire fillers. There is no way to find out which except by using a tack.

Allis, even in her inexperience, rather resented being taken for granted as an accessory to Dukane's triumphal progress across the flower-strewn sphere. But she had let him dangle around for some time because so many other girls envied her his kingly homage and because there was no one else for whom she cared particularly. Besides he did have money enough to do things in a story-book way. That helps even with maidens who would never allow Sunday baseball or golf to interfere seriously with church.

Duke spent his money—once his father's—like a prince.

Allis had the ring in her purse now, easily accessible and ready to return to him.



Clark nearly stumbled when her glance crossed his; she seemed to be making a frantic appeal to him for help.

"Let's see it," Duke suggested when the dinner was quite finished.

Allis produced it. "How about it?" he asked. "Shall I slip it on the old finger myself?"

"I don't believe that I can find any reason why I should take it," Allis replied.

"Don't need any reason," Duke overruled. "It will look well there—that's excuse enough. And when you get tired of wearing it you can sell it for enough to buy you a set of gold-rimmed spectacles for your old age."

Duke talked nonsense entertainingly. Or was it nonsense? His reasoning sounded like that of the *passé* beauty she had met that day in her dressing-room. Something for her old age. It was strange for a creature so obviously the embodiment of youth even to think of age, but the unhappy vision of Sylvia Samson had clouded her perspective, had brought hideously near the remote mountain of years that must be climbed some day. Perhaps they were right; maybe it was necessary to provide a staff now against the time when the road would be no longer smooth.

He took the ring from her fingers and picked up her left hand. "You're the prettiest thing I ever set my eyes on," he was

saying, "and to have you wear something which has once belonged to me will make me prouder than any prince in all the world."

The ring was slipping onto her finger. There was time to resist but the will failed to send the message. When she looked once more the magnificent diamond was sparkling at her from her left hand. Whether by mistake or intent he had placed it upon the third finger. Yet nothing had been said about an engagement and Duke was not shy.

Later, in his car, he kissed her fingers and then her lips. It would have seemed ungenerous to refuse. After that he took it as a matter of course. And so did Allis. It made her inexplicably unhappy, as if she had moved into a house that didn't quite fit her. It was somehow disappointing to pass a milestone of life with so little thrill.

That night she cried herself to sleep. And for the life of her she could not have explained why.

The week between Christmas and New Year's came along and left Clark Jennings cheerlessly idle. All of the Mexicans in his employ celebrated the holidays so sincerely that they were practically useless for work for an entire fortnight. By a freak of chance it was warm, even at night, around Revera and when one stumbled across the recumbent form of a "Mex" sleeping it off out-of-doors, one allowed him to lie there where the air would purify him the more swiftly. There was no danger of freezing.

Revera was rather an attractive place at night otherwise. At any rate it looked much better after sundown than it did during daylight. The Revera Dam was already delivering electric light and the town was prodigally strewn with tungstens, some of them colored, so that the effect was rather gay.

Still it was no place to spend an enforced vacation. Clark mentioned this to the proprietor of the Palm Tree Inn when he came in for supper.

The latter, Silver Sneed, a squaw-man, allowed that Clark was probably right. "If it wasn't for my woman," he hinted, "I'd cut out. But a married man—" He paused in a vain effort to think of something noble to mention in connection with his abnegation. "What'll you have?" They were at the table Clark usually occupied and Sneed leaned over the back of the adjacent chair.

"Tell Mrs. Sneed," Clark was always very punctilious in referring to the Indian woman, "to fry me a brace of eggs and some ham."

He had been eating ham and eggs as a safety-first measure for six months straight, but the evening ceremony remained the same, regardless.

Sneed, who needed a shave and a hair-cut among other things, shuffled off to the kitchen. He wore no coat, and his vest hung grotesquely loose from his shoulders. From the rear he could have easily passed for an inanimate warning to crows.

While the proprietor was out in the kitchen a car drew up in front of the hotel and two tourists came in. Clark, who noticed them casually, at first thought they were both men, but when they took off their outer wraps he was mildly startled to find that one was a girl. He knew it though her back was turned and she wore riding-breeches and puttees the same as her companion. Perhaps it was her slightness of build or her timidity of manner that stamped her unmistakably. Certainly, by comparison with the other, she was a shrinking violet indeed. For he rapped upon the decrepit hotel desk with a vigor and assertiveness that shook every roofing nail in the beaver-board building.

Sneed appeared inquiringly from the kitchen.

"Supper," commanded the visitor.

"Steak or ham'n eggs?" retorted Sneed laconically.

"Steak," chose the tourist, thus instantly proclaiming himself a stranger to the menu of the Palm Tree Inn.

The proprietor departed and the guests turned to find themselves a table.

Clark was looking when the girl faced about and to his lips leaped unbidden the suppressed exclamation, "My God, girl, don't you ever wear skirts?"

Every picture which he, or you or I for that matter, had ever seen of her recorded her entire outline. In the riding togs she looked much younger, though, and more wistful if anything. Her coiffure was arranged close to her head under a close-fitting duveteen hat of almost the same color as the hair underneath.

Pictures, both moving and still, always portrayed the tresses puffed out. But he recognized her and unmistakably. He rather wondered that he did.

He could not think of any reason why he should remember this particular girl more than any other. The fact remained, however, that he did recollect her distinctly and fully, and even more than that, he was completely fascinated by her presence. He stared at her to the point of rudeness.

Perhaps it was because she seemed restless and nervous that his eyes con-



"Flat on the floor!" Clark ordered as he let in the clutch. A shout of anger rose from behind them.

stantly strayed from his own plate to the smartly-coated and slender back which was turned toward him. Her companion was talking animatedly to the squaw-man who had come from the kitchen and was leaning, in his familiar attitude, over the back of a nearby chair. The girl seemed little interested in the conversation and from time to time she glanced furtively towards the door, as if she were a little afraid that someone would catch her doing it.

"Was you and your wife planning to stay here tonight?" Sneed was asking casually, when he got a chance to slip a word in during the flow of the other man's talk.

The girl herself answered. "I'm not his—"

The man interrupted. "We're going on fifty miles or so."

"To Mr. Swift's sister's," the girl put in.

"What name?" Sneed was mildly inquisitive.

"My sister's name is Conroy, Mrs. Conroy, if you must know."

"I don't have to know, stranger, but I just wondered. There ain't hardly any white women hereabouts and I never heard of no Conroy, male or female."

"Perhaps we'd better turn back, Duke," suggested the girl timidly.

"Perhaps we'd better not," growled the young man. "You leave all the arranging to me."

"You'd ought to stay here overnight," Sneed persisted. "It's doggone dangerous traveling across the desert after dark."

"Danger from what? Coyotes?"

"Nope. Hold-up men. There's an auto-bandit been pretty lively around here lately."

Clark fancied that the girl shuddered with a convulsion of fear at Sneed's cock-and-bull story about the bandit. He was tempted to go over and tell the travelers that the host of Palm Tree Inn had been telling that story for months to every traveler who showed signs of escaping to the next hotel and that there was not nearly so much chance of being held up in the desert as there was in Los Angeles.

But the stranger was started on a new tack.

"Bring on your stage robber," he was saying. "I eat one for breakfast every morning. I've got an automatic in my overcoat for just that class of cheap crook. I'd be glad to see how one of these so-called bad men would stand up against a man who fought the Boche for three years straight. Do you know what I can do with an automatic pistol? I can drill a hole—"

And he went on for ten minutes describing his prowess and finished up with a complete description of how to take the gun apart, naming each part, how to assemble same, topping off the entire recital with the

Why that sort of a look should be directed at him he could not just make out. Has it been said that Clark Jennings had not had much practise in studying the language of the female eye? And he did not know that any woman could tell at a glance that he could be trusted. Women scorn a man of that kind for a flirtation, but in time of trouble they fly to him like filings to a magnet.

That look in the girl's eyes worried him when he got outside and stood on the low veranda haunted by a feeling that there was something he ought to do.

Sneed joined him. "D'je ever hear anybody talk like that egg in there? Alongside of him a rock-crusher would sound like a convention of clams."

Clark assented absently. He was still wondering—

"Pretty girl, though," the squaw man continued. "Don't know how he ever got her to come along with him—"

"I suppose a wife has to go where her husband does," Clark answered.

"Wife? Where do you get that idea? She ain't no more his wife than I am."

"You spoke of her as his wife."

"I guess I did when I was talking to 'em, but I ain't been running a wayside inn for ten years without recognizing the signs. I always call 'em Mrs. to their faces. But the girl ain't married to him. If she was, do you suppose she'd let him talk like that? There ain't nothin' in the world like a wife to make a man think with a muffler on. You'll probably find that out some day. The doll in there is somebody he just picked up for the trip and she's an amateur at that, scared stiff and wishing she was home in her own little bed, or I'm no judge. Pretty nice pickin', though, and I wouldn't mind—"

"Shut up!" the younger man commanded abruptly.

"The devil you say. What for?"

"Because I say so." The color swiftly receded under Clark's tan and his eyes snapped the information that he would just as soon commit manslaughter as not.

Sneed backed away cautiously from this mountain-lion whom he had previously estimated as a very tame cat indeed. "Oh, all right, but I don't see where it's any skin off your nose."

Clark wouldn't have told either as he stepped off into the road and slowly permitted his fists to unclinch. He had not generally considered himself a champion of

unknown ladies in distress, especially of ladies who allowed themselves to get into compromising predicaments.

Still, the impulse was there and it persisted and governed the next thing that he did. Perhaps if he had waited for reason to guide him he never would have done it. Perhaps.

He went to the tool shed and garage of the company and routed out Tony, the Italian night-watchman. Together they loaded a light truck with half a dozen steel drums of cylinder-oil and three barrels marked "Axle-grease."

Tony did not understand but he did not ask questions and made no demur when his apparently demented boss ordered him to leave his job and come with him.

Clark drove the truck out of the company yard and down the



modest assertion that he had done it faster than any other man in the Allied Armies.

It seemed incredible that any person could crowd so much superfluous detail into a unit of time. Clark heard, aghast, and decided to let nature take its course. Some day his tongue would wear off at the hinge and merciful silence would ensue.

Clark finished his supper and went out. He had to pass the table where the two tourists were sitting. The man was too busy talking to notice him but the girl looked up. Clark nearly stumbled when her glance crossed his. Her eyes were much more beautiful than any photograph had ever given her credit for and just now they seemed to be making a frantic appeal to him for help.

The Good Little Bathing Girl

trail for a distance of ten miles or so before he showed any sign of having a definite destination. When they had crossed a long iron bridge, however, Clark turned to his assistant with the startling query, "Tony, do you know where you are now?"

"No sabe," Tony replied promptly. From working with the Mexicans he spoke a doubly hybrid dialect.

"Well, you're in Arizona," Clark stated emphatically. "And I want you to remember that. Everything this side of that bridge is Arizona."

"A' right." He peered about him in the darkness. "Not such a good country like da Californ', I think."

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While Tony unscrewed the oil drums Clark himself opened the barrels of grease and shoveled the contents carefully into the arroyo. Then, with the shovel, he thoughtfully spread the slippery mess over the concrete surface of the runway.

"What for?" Tony asked, curiosity at last overcoming a natural and commendable tendency to mind his own business.

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"Hop in," he commanded.

"Duke," she said desperately, "I've changed my mind. I don't want to go any farther. I want you to take me home."

The man laughed. "Home is over two hundred miles back."

"Over two hundred miles? Why, you said your sister's ranch was only a little ways out of town."

"Well, it is. What's two hundred miles in a bus like this?"

"Duke," she accused, "I don't believe you have a sister or that you'd take me to her house if you had one."

Duke hesitated a moment. "What's the difference, dear? You're perfectly safe with me."

"Then you lied to me."

"Say, listen, kid, a chap has to lie a little in this world or he'd never get what he wants. You know I want you. You won't lose anything by being nice to me. You know that ring I gave you wasn't bought for nothing."

The girl jerked the diamond from her finger. "There's your ring." She held it out.

He refused to take it.

"You'd better," she advised.

"Nothing doing."

She threw it as far as she could into the dust of the street.

The man laughed unpleasantly. "You'd better get in or—"

"Or what?" Defiantly.

"I'll leave you in this God-forsaken hole without a cent and you can see how you like that."

As if to punctuate his threat, a drunken Mexican lurched down the street and stopped, swaying, beside the car.

"Huh," grunted the Mex, "you son of a gun pretty girl. I geev you one kees, by dam."

He reached out to embrace her and in a shudder of aversion she shrank into the protection of the car which shot forward suddenly and roared down the street.

The shock of the grabbing clutch threw her into the seat. She was hurt a little but was too frightened to exclaim about it. Instead, she huddled into the corner as far as possible from this suddenly-revealed lesser of two evils.

Neither of them spoke. The game had suddenly become too crude to be expressed in terms of language. The girl's mind was occupied solely with desperate thoughts of escape from the man, and he, cursing the luck which had put the cards on the table so maladroittly, took out his anger on the engine of his car which he raced at breakneck speed over the uneven road.

Suddenly the headlights of the car picked up a motor truck halted beside the road some distance ahead. They both saw it at once.

"Robbers!" exclaimed the girl half fearfully.

"Nonsense, but even if they are they've got a fat chance of stopping this honeymoon cart," the young man growled savagely. "Watch us brush by."

But the brushing by wasn't so good just then. The car dipped swiftly into an arroyo and then came to a sickening stop. The wheels revolved madly and the engine raced like a whip-lashed thoroughbred, but there was no forward movement.

The driver at last cut off his racked motor and picked up the automatic which was on the seat beside him.

A rather harmless looking, smallish man, with an exceedingly dirty face, stepped out of the darkness. His hands were empty.

"What's the matter, mister? Are you stuck?" he inquired blandly.

"What the devil's wrong here?" the driver demanded impatiently.

"I guess probably it's the load of grease and oil we spilled on done it," the stranger concluded sagely. "I thought it would have to be cleaned up before any other cars could go through."

Then catching sight of the driver's weapon he stepped closer to the car. "Gee, that's a regular army automatic, ain't it? Ain't seen one since I was discharged. I used to be able to take one apart and put it together again quicker than any man in the army."

"Not quicker than I could," retorted the driver. "Why I—"

"Lemme look at it, will you, buddy?" The dirty-faced young man took the gun from the semi-reluctant fingers of its owner and gazed at it fondly. "Is she loaded?"

"Yes, but—"

The stranger threw back the recoil carriage and noted that a cartridge slipped into the barrel. "So she is. Then stick 'em up!"

He shoved the loaded and cocked automatic into the ribs of its owner. "And get out of the car! Lively! Stay where you are, lady! And Tony, bring the rope."

The girl watched in amazement while her escort was firmly trussed and deposited on the floor of the truck. All this took place in the full glare of the headlights, so no detail of the operation escaped her.

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page 140



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PHOTOGRAPH BY EDWARD TRAYNE HOBBS

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(1940)



MARJORIE KUMMER—the talented daughter of the talented Clare
—who acted in her mother's comedy hit "Rollo's Wild Oat."

PHOTOGRAPH BY EDWARD THAYER WORRICE



GRACE LA RUE, beloved of vaudeville audiences, is now shining in the musical comedy firmament as a co-star in "Dear Me."



THE ever-picturesque Olga Petrova has been lured from the films at last, and shortly will be seen—and heard—on the stage.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CAMPBELL STUDIO



UNLESS you have seen Vanda Hoff dance in "Two Little Girls in Blue," you don't know what a real nautch dance is.

68

PHOTOGRAPH BY NICHOLAS MURRAY

Clare saw that, for the first time, they had come to one of those desolate moments when two people who love each other must clash.

Flash Molloy

The most dramatic part of a baseball game is played behind the scenes—in the club-house and on the bench. This inside story of a Big League championship game is told by a man who picked up most of his facts from the players themselves. You may recognize some of them.

By

James Hopper

Illustrations by F. C. Crooks

THE first time "Flash" Molloy slid gracefully down the primrose path to rough going, hard rock and near perdition, it was religion that saved him—through some queer throw-back along the maternal line. He was then still in the minors, playing third base on the Terre Basse Club of the Four T League. He wandered that night into the camp-meeting idly, and with intent to rail; but when, in his corner of the big tent, all the people began to sway and lament, he suddenly found himself swaying also, while out of his mouth happy shouts issued, and groans of mental misery. Five minutes later, to the great chorus of

"The Year of Jubilee has come
Return, ye ransomed sinner, home!"

Flash had stepped upon the platform and was a mourner.

The "religion" thus convulsively won, did not last long, but it did give Flash time to take a new hold of himself. Soon he was once more the laughing youngster, idolized of the rustic fans, beloved for the joyous recklessness with which he swung his bat and rattled with long hits the loose boards of the "parks."

The second time Flash went wrong, it was not religion that saved him. It was love.

He was a Big-Leaguer by now, a celebrated personage, but he strayed off the narrow path much as he had done in his salad days, with some difference as to splendor—"nobby" dressers instead of bar-room hicks, poker instead of craps, champagne instead of rye—but with results ditto. He put on weight, he slowed up; he wobbled on the edge of discard.

It was then his zigzag way came across Clare Early's straight road. Clare was also a national figure: a vaudeville top-liner. On the stage, she was one feverish agitation of patter, song and dance. Off the stage, she had a low voice, a gentle manner, lashes that curved upward, and beneath these curling lashes a straight, clear glance. She had worked very hard ever since she was six; perhaps this was the reason why. Looking dreamily at Flash through the smoke of a cigarette, at a late supper at Sherry's, she decided, perhaps, that she had won the right to relax

a little at last, and allow herself the luxury of this charming, irresponsible boy. Or more simply, it may have been that his weakness drew her strength.

Anyway, both fell very much in love: they married.

After which Clare took stock. She had lifted herself from her slum childhood to her present eminence only through a ceaseless, ferocious fight, and had learned to tread her way with eyes wide open. Taking stock, she saw that what she owned was a man overboard. She hesitated not one moment. Quietly but with decision, she left the stage and gave up her career to devote herself to this task of rescue—and resuscitation.

What Flash needed was to be kept happy; she could do that. Also, being at the bottom a great big child, to be amused; she amused him. What he could not stand was loneliness; she took to traveling with him on the circuit. She sat in the grand stand at every game, her plume a rallying point, steady good counsel and, at times, flaming inspiration, for the romance of their mating ran still vivid in his veins.

The effect soon was visible. Flash finished the season in good style, and by the middle of the next, reached the heights. Fast in the field and on bases, facing the artillery of all pitchers with a laugh, he not only climbed the percentage column till he was leading batter in the league, but he also established himself securely in the affection of the loud multitudes who followed his fortunes.

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Socks (which is not their name) began to show rejuvenation. The club was climbing, climbing; soon it was at grapples for first place. And it was a bright newspaper man who (privately) pointed to the fact that several members of the Socks besides Flash played for Clare's plume—and none more clearly than Truck Burns. Truck had always been a dependable catcher—a very rock of Gibraltar. But now a new confidence established itself in his bat, a new daring in his legs, a new genius in his head.

What the newspaper man had whispered was the truth. Truck, that great big, slow, two-hundred-pounder, adored Clare—dumbly, blindly, stupidly and with reverent resignation. Clare was quick to see the nature of the worship that dwelt in the man's stricken eyes, quick to see there was no danger of its ever declaring itself, quick to see how easily it could be diverted to that purpose which now was her only purpose in life—the welfare of that crazy boy she had married. And a triangle was formed—not such a one as is usually described by the word, but a three-party relation in which the older, steadier man, and the woman, young in years but mature of wisdom, united in a guardianship of the lovable but temperamental being who was the friend of the one, the husband of the other.

Within this subtle and warm care, Flash developed and scintillated and so also did the Socks. And this was the period, now historical in the annals of the national game, during which that famous club thrice won the pennant, and twice the world championship.

Now comes Flash Molloy's third fall—and the most serious.

They had been married now three years. For three years, Clare had been off the stage, and had left in that world a real void. Her picturesque marriage to one of the nation's public characters had only added to her value in the mind of certain half-oriental gentlemen who think in terms of cardboard splendor and ringing shekels. And now an offer was made her to play once more, one so magnificent she must think it over. The thinking, she found, was much affected by a strong tugging which had been long secret in her heart. She decided to accept, and her first words of this hit Flash hard.

"What's the matter?" he questioned, in the tone of an injured child. "Haven't I done the right thing by you, Clare? Haven't I kept straight and played good ball? Haven't we been good chums and everything?"

She saw that, for the first time, they had come to one of those desolate moments when two beings who love each other and who are both right, must clash. "Oh, Flash—it isn't that!"

"You don't think I'm giving you enough," he said stubbornly. "You're tired of me; you want more excitement!"

"Flash!" She drew to her bosom his head, which yielded only siffly. "Flash—don't say such things. You hurt. You hurt me, Flash. Now listen. Listen to me carefully. I love you. I love you more than anything on earth, you great big—baseball player. But there comes sometimes, Flash, in a woman's heart, a want which is beside her love for her mate; something, Flash, so quiet, yet strong, and *always* there—"

Flash had sensed an inadequacy in the first answer she had given him; his doubt now became assurance. "You didn't tell me the real reason why you wanted to go back to the stage, did you? Not the real reason."

"No," she admitted. "I have not told you the real reason."

"You want to get away. You want to—"

But she placed her hand on his lips. "Hush—don't say it again. Don't. I'll tell you the real reason. I'll tell you now."

And she told him; she whispered it in his ear. He rose, and walked to and fro, his hands in his pockets, a flush upon his face, half embarrassment, half pleasure. "Why, *that's* all right," he said at length. "I'm for that! I hadn't thought of it, that's all. Say, it would be fun to teach the little cuss the game. I bet he'll swing a bat! I'm for that, Clare! But what has that to do with your going back to the stage? I don't see—"

She explained to him carefully. "You're a baseball player, Flash. One of the greatest there is, but still a baseball player. And you know what that means. A few more years of the top money, then the discard, the bush. And I, Flash? A few more years and my legs won't work so fast, and the mob won't laugh when I try to be funny. You see, we are of the same kind; quick blooms! Well, then, while there is the chance— Oh, Flash—let's make it safe for—the little cuss. They're offering me a mint. Two years of it, rolling in this way, and we can afford—that little cuss. Without feeling we're running him into a hard game, stacked against him. We'll have enough to send him to school, Flash!"

This did not end the discussion, but Clare, wide-eyed and clear-eyed, took upon herself the decision. Within two weeks she was

rehearsing; within a month, she had opened in Manhattan, with a brilliant success and a personal ovation.

Heretofore, Clare and Flash had passed the winter at a southern beach, where he kept his strong health and, before the training call, began to condition himself slowly. Now, he passed the winter in New York. Clare, hard-worked, living the topsyturvy life of the actress, had little time to give him, and he was suffering with an obscure shame because, with Clare acting, it was as if publicly he had been declared wanting as a provider. He began to go down-hill.

The three weeks of training at a southern watering-resort, the momentary pleasure of finding himself with his fighting comrades once more, of using his body, long cramped in idleness, placed him back on his feet: every one promised him a great year. But when the season had really started, with its long stays in the western city which was the home of the Socks, and the long circuits of friendless cities, loneliness gripped him hard, and discouragement, and a dim resentment. May came, and instead of breaking up, Clare's company started on a tour of the West. By midsummer, the heat, the stress and the strain of the pennant-race, Flash was slipping fast into the habits which, twice before, had come near finishing him.

August came, and Clare's return, and the disbandment of her troop. But almost without pausing she accepted an offer to play in London—an offer such as she could not refuse, utterly carried away as she was by her purpose and her yearning, now that its consummation seemed so near. Almost without pausing, she was off once more, across the Atlantic.

Before sailing she had seen Truck.

"Oh, Truck," she said, "I'm going away, and I'm afraid. You'll look out for him, won't you, Truck?"

"I sure will," said Truck solidly.

"Keep him from that gang, Truck. And from—you know—the wine that is red. Or any other color, Truck!"

Truck was silent a moment, torn between a wish to warn her and the male loyalty to male. "Oh, he ain't been hitting it up much," he finally lied. "He's been pretty straight."

"I know," Clare breathed, eager to accept anything that might stifle the foreboding in her heart. "But I don't like some of those fellows he seems to know. Oh, Truck, keep good watch! I'll never leave him again. But it's a clean-up this time; a clean-up, and the last time! Oh, Truck, keep good watch!"

"I'll do that," said Truck.

But the best of poor, honest, plodding Truck proved of little power once Clare had sailed. Flash was now not only lonely but keenly resentful. He sulked, he groused, he threw himself into dissipation not in search of pleasure, but with a fixed desire to hurt some one; to hurt his wife, to hurt Truck, all his friends, himself.

Truck worried, for, unfortunately, the season was ending in a way that might give Flash a chance to vent the gloomy perversity in which he had sunk. The season was ending in turmoil, uncertainty and an evil wind of gossip.

Up to July the Socks, weathered veterans, had led impressively. Then from way down in the ruck, the club which here shall be called the Reds had started an astonishing drive. Twenty games won straight had placed them in the first division; then with one defeat as a halt, they started crawling relentlessly upon the Socks, now faltering among rumors of internal strife.

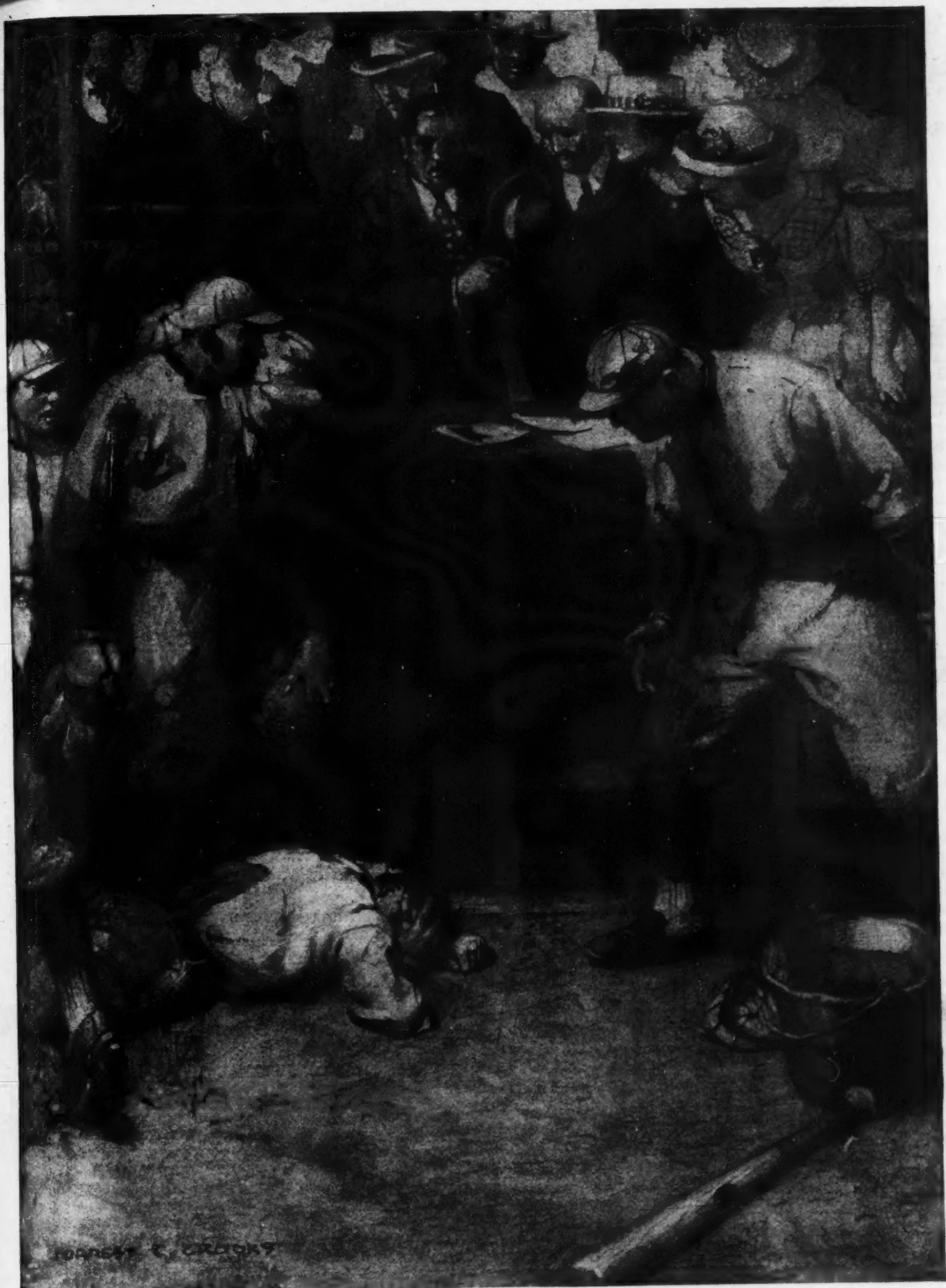
Excitement grew tense throughout the sporting world as the Reds crept up, and the Socks, dropping a game now and then, fell back in a position more and more precarious. The end of the season neared. It was the extravagant period after the war, when there seemed to be bundles of inflated currency in all pockets, and in all hearts a recklessness to spend it. Gambling, for the first time, had seized hold of the national game. About the tottering Socks furtive and sinister figures began to slink, and Truck became afraid. Though not a great psychologist, he saw peril in Flash's bad mood.

With a rush, amid great excitement, the season came to the eve of its last day, and the situation was this:

The Socks led the Reds by a fraction of a game, and each club had one game to play on the last day. If both won their games, the Socks won the pennant. If both lost their games, the Socks won the pennant. But if the Socks lost and the Reds won, the pennant was the Reds'.

That evening, Truck came upon Flash as the latter conversed behind a pillar of the hotel lobby with a slim, oldish person who looked like a ruined jockey; Truck disliked this man to such a degree that he decided to speak.

"Flash," he said, when the man had gone, "that was an ugly bird you were talking with. I'd drop that kind if I were you—specially these times."



His mates gathered around him. "What's the matter, Flash?" "Are you hurt?" But it was Truck alone who saw what those shaking shoulders meant.

"What's the matter with the times?" Flash countered.

"You know, Flash. To-morrow's the deciding game, and there's a lot of slimy talk around. And we're sort of on the skids—and—"

"Wait a minute, Truck!" Flash's tone had a deadly briskness foreign to that usually amiable young man. "I want you to listen to me. Listen hard, because I ain't going to say it more than once. I'll talk to any guy I please, see? It's none of your busi-

ness. I'm going to live just as I please, see? How I live is my business. And as for you," he went on, with a smoothness that betokened long brooding and a piece well learned, "I have just one piece of advice. And that's, keep away. It ain't going to be healthy to monkey with this bird here no more. You've butted in almighty too much already. Think I don't see you plotting with Clare, eh? You two trying to boss me? Well—keep away! At least so long as she ain't your wife but mine," he finished fiendishly.

The shaft, long prepared and polished, and plunged with the glee of the half-devil and half-child, sank deep into the big man. All the little devils and angels so well laid within him, all the dim aches and yearnings and repressions which were his emotional baggage as far as Clare was concerned, were quickened to a disturbing dance. He colored, he choked. "All right, Flash," was all he could say, and said it weakly, and turned away.

Flash, his heart pounding strangely for one having won so fine a triumph, passed on through swinging doors into a pool-room. There, as fate would have it, the jockey-like, oldish man stood, leaning against the wall. Flash went to him after the merest flick of a hesitation. "You said five thousand advance and five thousand after," he slipped out of the corner of his mouth.

"Five before and five after," said the man, but without moving his mouth at all, and with his glazed eyes fixed past Flash and far away.

"I'm on," Flash said—and plunging his hands in his pockets, he strolled toward one of the tables.

That night, when Flash went to bed in the hotel, he found under his pillow five one-thousand-dollar bills.

When, late in the morning he awakened, he was in evil humor. For weeks he had not slept enough to balance the daily drain of a ball-player's life. Then he uncomfortably remembered the scene with Truck, and took the human course of working himself up further against the man who was thus causing him discomfort. Then in his mail was a letter from Clare, a letter full of the zest of one working hard and liking it, a letter lacking in melancholy and in which that young woman, usually of such infallible wisdom, had made the mistake of adding a postscript. "Be a good boy, Flash," said that unlucky postscript.

"Huh, bossing me!" Flash growled. "From London," he went on, his voice creaking with heavy irony. "Bossing me from old London, sixteen thousand miles away! They think they can all do it now. She and Truck and everybody. From London!"

Still, when he left the hotel for the grounds, stuffing the bills like so many rags into the depths of his trouser pockets, his mind was not made up. And when, two hours later, he took his place at third base for the crucial game, his mind was not made up. Looking across the field to the great score-board, he saw that the Reds, playing in New York, two hours further east, were loping away with their game, ten to one in the seventh inning. The Socks faced at last the tense crisis which had been threatening for weeks. They must win this game or lose the pennant.

Amid the roar of an enormous and hostile crowd, Flash took his place in the field with his mates, his mind still not made up. And perhaps he would never have made it up had he not, in the second inning, failed to touch his bag in a lightning attempt at a double-play. Coming to the bench when the inning had ended he was met by his manager's displeasure. Pat O'Doole owned a tongue more efficient than he knew. "Say," he shouted to Flash, so that all the others heard, "ivory must have been some high when we bought yours. And fer why do you keep it all in your dome, eh? Ain't you got a deposit box in the bank?"

Flash was just taking up his bat to go to the plate, and he came very near crashing it down across the ironical manager's cranium. When he faced the pitcher, he was in a fury and struck viciously and wildly at the first balls served him. Then the wily pitcher floated up a slow one, and struck him out.

Flash's cup was now full. When, the Socks' half of the third inning over without result, he took his place in the field, he hated Clare, he hated Truck, he hated O'Doole, he hated the pitcher who had struck him out, he hated himself for having struck out, he hated the game, he hated every one and everything.

The home team had worked a man around to third base with only one out. Now, from the batter, the ball came to Flash.

It was a shrieking liner, coming straight along a layer of the air well above his head. Instantly, without waiting for command of his head, his well-trained and supple athlete's body met the challenge. He leaped far up; his right arm loose from the pivoting shoulder, swung to its utmost reach; his gloved hand met the ball and knocked it down. It was there, spinning at his feet; he pounced upon it like a cat, he had it in hand, poised in position for throwing.

And then, in that flicker of a moment, perversely, his mind was made up. A man was running home, a man was running toward first. Flash made a gesture to throw home, held the ball as though he were too late there, pivoted, and threw to first. But he did not throw to first. Instead he let loose a stupefying wild pitch which, sailing over the first-baseman's stretched fingers went sailing on and far into the green grass.

With the thunder of the whole world in his ears Flash stood

rooted. He could see the galloping back of the first-baseman going after the ball; he could see the right-fielder loping at right angles on the same errand, while about him his mates shifted to cover and relay. And when everything was over, the batter stood on third base, from which he was immediately sacrificed home.

When the inning ended, the home team had two runs—a heart-breaking lead in such a game—but Flash, going to the bench, was still full of the child's sulky satisfaction at having, in one gesture, avenged himself against a hostile world. And even when, at the bench, he met the face of Truck, a face apoplectic and perspiring and appalled, no remorse did more than stir very faintly within him. Rather did Truck's look of dumb horror place him in an exultation at the enormity of his deed. He felt like a reader of dime novels who should find himself suddenly in one of the extraordinary situations he had thought possible only in print.

But when two more innings had passed without changing the score, and the matter began to take on the aspect of something forever settled, Flash began to suffer with a certain dissatisfaction.

This had hardly an ethical source; the matter was more simple. Flash always disliked being beaten, and now he was being beaten. And it seemed to him that the victors were bearing their success without modesty. They were acting, in fact, as though it was their own intelligence and skill which had placed them in the superior position. Their pitcher bore on his broad face a greasy complacency which made Flash wild. "The big stiff," he kept growling, thinking of that pitcher. "The big stiff: he thinks *he's* done it!"

But it was in the sixth inning that full clarity came to him.

In that inning, the home nine placed a man on second. The next man up hit a long single into center field. "Bunting" Goodwin, the Socks' center-fielder, came running in fast, and scooped up the ball. By that time the runner who had been on second, rounded third and made for home. "Home! Home!" Flash roared to Goodwin. Bunting hesitated a moment, then threw, and the ball going wide of the plate, let the runner in for the home team's third run.

Flash stood a moment stupefied. Then a wild anger took possession of him. "The dog!" he cried, looking off toward the culpable center-fielder. "The dirty, thiefing dog!"

The shout was lost in the immense clamor which now hailed this new Socks' disaster, but not lost to Flash, within whom it reverberated and struck light.

"The dirty, thiefing dog"—that is what he had called Bunting. And Bunting had made a wild throw, not on purpose. But what about himself? He had made a wild throw. And purposely.

"Dirty, thiefing dog!"

As he squatted for the next play, in his mind's eye he could see all of his mates spread about him. "Dirty, thiefing dog"—that's what he was, he, Flash!

His soul began to sweat.

At every ball hit, he threw himself madly—no matter where it went; at every chance to cover, to retrieve, he flung his body in desperate effort; every gesture, he made with all of his strength. But all this was no good, no good. No game could be won that way; no game so thoroughly lost.

But when came the Socks' turn at the bat, his end was not up and he had to sit impotently on the bench and watch the side go out one-two-three.

Again in the field, throwing himself into tense strivings that accomplished nothing, that could accomplish nothing. Then on the bench—and once more no chance given him; three men out in order, and no one chance coming to him.

The field again, and then it was the ninth inning.

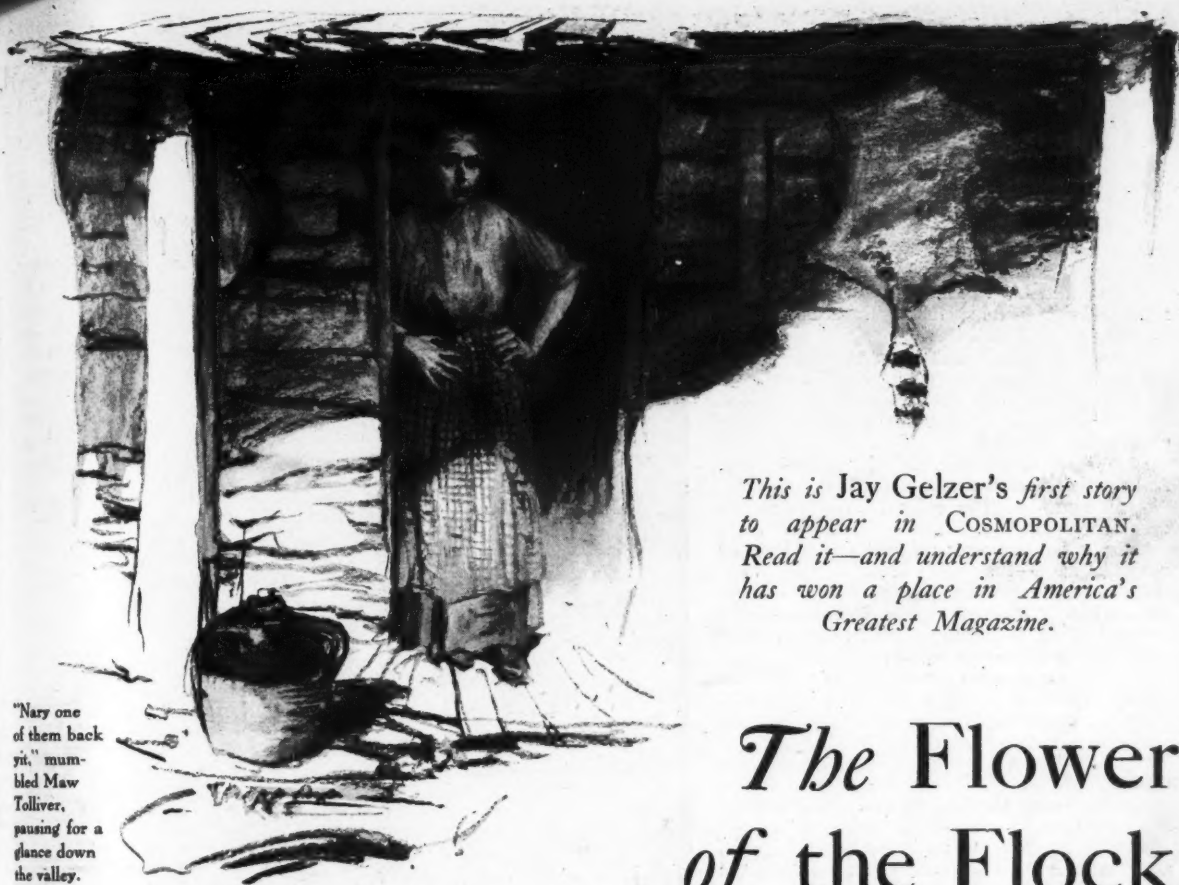
Flash sat on the bench, alternately taken with fever and with chill. He was second up; Bobbie Sands, the first baseman, was batting. It seemed to Flash that the duel between Bob and the pitcher was lasting forever. Bob drew three balls and then two strikes. Then he kept fouling and fouling. At last came a bad ball. "Four balls," the umpire bellowed, and Bob trotted leisurely to first base.

Flash's heart was thumping as he came to the plate, and little bright spots danced before his eyes. But he steadied himself as he faced the pitcher. One sole thought came to him. "I've got to knock the smithereens out of that ball!"

If only he made a home-run! A home-run, with Bob on first—that made two runs, that brought the score three to two—and the heavy end of the Socks was up. A home-run! That would almost even up the score; that might altogether break this pitcher who, seemingly wobbling, had just given a base on balls.

Flash let two go by, then, to a perfect one, swung with gritted teeth and gritted soul.

(Continued on page 130)



This is Jay Gelzer's first story to appear in COSMOPOLITAN. Read it—and understand why it has won a place in America's Greatest Magazine.

The Flower of the Flock

THE STORY OF A KENTUCKY MOUNTAIN MOTHER, AND THE PRICE SHE PAID THAT HER SON MIGHT FIND THE ROMANCE SHE HAD BEEN DENIED.

Illustrations by W. H. D. Koerner

ONLY at high noon, when the sun stood directly over the narrow valley in which the Tollivers lived, did falling rays of sunlight rest impartially upon the rude cabin of hewn logs huddled against one mountain slope and upon the tiny rectangle of cleared land slanting upward on the opposite slope, as if trying crazily to stand upon two corners. At other times, from the moment the summit of Old Razorback was tinged with the pinkness of dawn, an exact half of the valley lay in the shadow creeping gradually from one slope to the other. Against the green glory of those two sloping walls extending upward, the cabin itself was bare and ugly, its forlorn porch sagging, the nondescript outbuildings lending emphasis to the general shabbiness. Often enough in his boyhood young Dave Tolliver, regarding wistfully the first putting forth of tender spring leafage upon the mountain slopes, had wished ruefully that the rough logs of the cabin held the same magic power of achieving a furbishing of green. He loved beauty, young Dave, pausing frequently at his work in the field to gaze upward at drifts of cloud scurrying across the azure blue of a sky no less blue than his eyes.

All of which was, quite naturally, absurd to the other Tolliver men, of whom there were six—great dark, hulking mountaineers with long pipes permanently riveted to bearded lips. Against their sodden animality the pink and white and gold beardless beauty of the boy glowed as brightly as a Canadian maple against a forest of beech trees. In every way he was an anomaly, young Dave—slipped in by some jest of fate among the precise pattern of Tollivers, to their astonished resentment and distrust. On an evening when the summit of the western mountain in turn showed pink and azure and purple, Maw Tolliver, her scanty hair pinned in a strictly utilitarian knot upon the back

of her head, stepped to the open doorway of the windowless cabin for a hurried glance down the valley.

"Nary one of them back yit," she mumbled, resting toilworn hands upon her scrawny hips. "Essie at the mill, Dave shootin', an' Pap an' the boys at the still. . . ."

From the lower end of the valley a file of men appeared, wide hatted, heavy-booted, six of them, as alike as peas in the selfsame pod. Swiftly the old woman dumped the ashes from her pipe, hobbling back to push the coffee-pot forward among the coals of the fireplace.

"They air sartin sure fractious ternity," she muttered anxiously, blowing upon the coals vigorously with a dilapidated bellows, before her eyes an ominous picture of the aggressive stride of the six. "Ef only they don't go pickin' on Dave. . . ."

A thump upon the porch proclaimed their arrival.

"Maw!"

"Hyar I be." She poked her head outside.

"Hurry the victuals."

"Toreckly . . . toreckly!" she cackled, speeding back to the fireplace with all the dubious agility of her poor old feet.

In silence the six grouped themselves upon the porch, hats low over beady, black eyes, flannel shirts open over hairy chests. From the edges of the valley chiffon-like mists of blue shadow crept in, veiling the out-buildings in kindly concealment. From within the cabin the fragrance of boiling coffee, of frying bacon, and of baking corn pone drifted out.

Of a sudden the eldest of the Tolliver boys, allowing his warped chair to come down sharply upon all four legs, broke the silence. "Maw!"

Wiping her hands on a checked apron she appeared in the doorway again, faded blue eyes mildly intent upon him, a

straggle of hair across a cheek flushed redly by the heat of the fire.

"Whut's hit?"

"Whar's he?"

"Yo' pappy sent him shootin'." Unnoticed by the other a tightness of anxiety set in about her sunken mouth.

"Time he wuz back."

With a practised squint at the mountain top, she spoke placatingly.

"Don't fret, Lem. He'll git hyar." A pause. Her eyes brightened hopefully. "Hyar he is now," she pointed. "Thar's David."

A figure detached itself from the shadows at the end of the ploughed field, rifle thrown carelessly across one arm, a bag slung over one shoulder.

"I'm hyar," he smiled, mounting the three sagging steps.

His smile, unreturned, faded to uneasiness. Awkwardly he eased the filled bag to the floor.

"Kill many?" The older brother's sneering eyes went to the bag.

"Plenty for termorrer an' next day. Ain't no use killin' more—they won't keep."

An unpleasant smile parted Lem's tobacco stained lips. "Hain't much on killin', air ye?" he jeered, looking up sullenly at the clustering gold curls and smooth face of the boy.

"I don't aim at killin' more'n we kin eat." With the tip of his boot young David opened the bag, several birds spilling limply out on the floor, their eyes glazed, their neck-feathers ruffled.

"Seems a shame ter shoot them, anyways," he muttered vaguely. "Whut we need ter eat I'm willin' ter shoot. Outside of thet I ain't aimin' ter shoot nary one."

Shouldering the bag again, he stepped inside, away from the silent hostility of his brothers, the old woman following.

"Hed a nice day, sonny?" she ventured, laying a timidly affectionate hand upon his arm.

He smiled. "I shot them birds the fust hour, Maw. After thet I clumb the highest hill I c'd find, an' sat thar listenin' to the trees blowin' in the wind, an' watchin' the road whar it gits lost in the woods on the way to the settlemint."

A pause. "Whar's Essie?" he half whispered, blue eyes searching the shadows around the fireplace.

"Over to the mill. She hain't back yit." She came closer, anxious eyes pleading with his. "Boy, don't rile them none ternight. They're plumb ugly, an' they hain't no tellin' whut they mought do."

"I won't." He squeezed her hand reassuringly. "Don't fret, Maw."

From fireplace to rude table she moved heavily, putting coarse food in place. And presently the others pushed into the room, silent and sullen, crowding at the table and showing a restrained eagerness. Almost immediately the noise of food hurriedly gulped and coffee noisily swallowed became audible.

Young David went and stood in the doorway, looking out into the hushed beauty of early evening. Behind the mountain a hound bayed at the rising moon, and from near at hand came a chitter of insect life. Something in the brooding peace stilled the faint, unrecognized bitterness in his heart. He would, he decided, wait and eat with his mother, now busy serving the others. To-night he shrank from the coarse jests of his brothers, the eager malice of his father. And perhaps Essie . . .

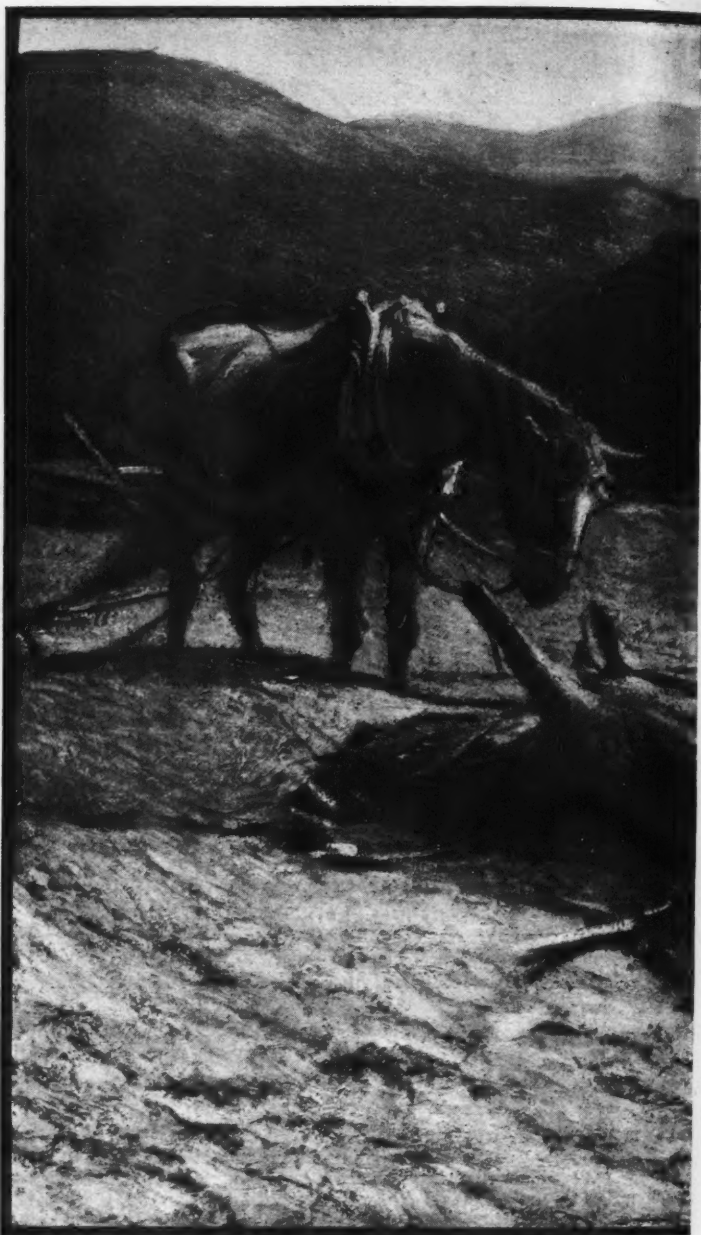
She came, almost upon the shadow of his unfinished thought, a white, breathless presence, slipping silently out of the thickening dark into his arms, her fine, dark hair flung to either side of her small face in her haste.

"David!" she sighed in relief.

"Hit's David, honey," he reassured, holding her gently. "Whar's the meal?"

She shuddered backward, motioning toward the distant road thickly screened with trees. "Somethin' moved in the grass, an' I drapped hit. Hit's out thar layin' in the road—maybe spilt." Her lips quivered. "Yore pappy'll scold."

"I'll git it," he comforted. "Wait hyar, honey." He strode away, her eyes following adoringly, returning almost instantly



Her silent fear hurt David unendurably, and inadequately he since he whupped my

with the luckily unspilled corn-meal. "Tain't spilled, Essie. Tired, honey?"

"No." A pause. Then, her eyes seeking his fearfully. "Ef-ef Lem'll only let me be."

A shadow fell upon both.

"Sometimes I'm plumb sorry yore pappy had ter take sick an' die hyar, leavin' you on our hands," said David bitterly, frowning into space.

"I hain't." A small hand touched his briefly. "Cause ef he hadn't I wouldn't ever 'a' seen you, David." With a flutter of skirts she disappeared into the cabin.

"Come on an' eat, gal," greeted Lem, patting the vacant chair beside his invitingly.

"I'll eat with Maw," refused the girl, shrinking away.

"An' David!" he flamed back jealously, springing up. Catching her by one protesting arm he pulled her into the empty chair forcibly. "When I says eat—yo eats!" he informed her triumphantly.

From the doorway young David ventured interference, well knowing that it would probably only make matters worse.

"Let Essie be," he said uncertainly.

Lem drew back his lips, revealing broken snags of tobacco-



would try to comfort her. "I hate Lem," Essie would sob despairingly. "I've hated him ever puppy ter death for hollerin' nights."

stained teeth, his eyes narrowing. "Keep a still tongue in yore head, young rooster, ef ye don't aim at havin' yer tail-feathers pulled!" he commanded. "Essie kin jest as well be gittin' used ter me—I'm aimin' ter marry her fust time the circuit rider comes this a-way."

"No!" cried Essie, shuddering away, scarlet flaming in her small white face.

"I says I'm aimin' ter marry yer," drawled Lem, provokingly. Then: "An' I kin lick any man this side o' the mounting," he concluded significantly.

The angry color drained from the girl's flushed face. "No," she said again, a curious stillness of defiance in her manner.

"Pap!" appealed Lem, addressing the male parent listening in coarse amusement. Wiping his whiskers with a rough hand, Pap took part in the discussion.

"I hain't aimin' ter hev no quarrelin' over a slip of a gal," he announced firmly. "Wimmin folks air forever stirrin' up trouble, anyways. Look hyar, gal—" he directed his attention entirely to Essie. "I took ye in when yo pappy come over the mountings from outer nowhar an' died on my hands. I raised ye sence thet time, an' while I ain't aimin' ter make things too hard fer ye, hit's time ye picked out one of these boys an' settled down.

Hit's time more Tollivers wuz comin' along . . ." he paused. "Thar's six fine, handsome boys hyar—take yer pick. Hain't one of them but's been makin' soft eyes at ye."

Instantly, in glad relief, her eyes flashed out to young David standing, disturbed and uneasy, in the doorway. "Then I choose David."

"Y'all hear?" inquired David simply.

Lem jumped to his feet with a roar of rage. "Ye cañ't hev her less'n ye kin lick me!"

"Thet hain't fair!" cried Essie, appealing in turn to the leader of the Tolliver clan. "Ye said I mought choose."

Deliberately the old man's eyes ranged from Lem, his chosen son, to the changeling offspring in the doorway.

"Reckon hit's fair enough," he drawled. "Dave thar—ef it warn't fer makin' Maw hot, I'd say he warn't a Tolliver at all. An' I didn't figger on yer pickin' him whut's only a strip of a boy. But ef he kin lick Lem, he kin hev ye, Essie. Thet's fair."

"Tain't fair!" cried Essie wildly, beginning to sob. "Y'know Dave cañ't lick Lem."

Behind her the old mother clasped trembling hands in the folds of her apron. "Don't fight him, Dave," she implored.

The Flower of the Flock

And to Lem, coaxingly. "Leave him be, Lem. He hain't no match fer ye. He—he hain't nuthin' but a boy, Dave hain't."

"He's man enough ter want Essie," returned Lem, sullenly. Exultantly he moved forward, catlike, shoulders hunched. "I'm aimin' at givin' ye the wust lickin' ye ever had, young feller," he announced. "Reckon ye won't be so purty when I git through with ye."

Young David thrust aside his mother gently. "Don't, Maw," he urged. "He kin lick me—he knows thet. But I air got ter fight him, anyways."

Sturdily he flung himself forward into the unequal struggle. "Hit him, Lem!" cried the old man viciously. "Shet them purty blue eyes fer him. Show Maw's baby he better keep ter the other side of the road from us Tollivers!"

The two women, clasped in each other's arms, shivered at the sound of flailing blows.

"Nouf?" inquired Lem savagely, when the boy began to reel under the inexorable pelting.

"No!" gasped David stoutly, almost blinded, a trickle of blood down one cheek.

With a cry of anguish Essie wheeled, snatching up David's rifle.

"You—Lem!" she said dangerously. "Stand away or I'll shoot! Thar's things stronger than a Tolliver."

Sullenly Lem stood back. "Tain't fair!" he protested, his great chest heaving with effort.

"An' tain't fair fer ye ter fight David nohow," she stormed, eyes flashing.

"Put down the gun, Essie," agreed Lem sulkily. "I'll quit."

Stumbling through the doorway, young David collapsed on the steps, his bruised face bowed into bleeding hands, tears of sheer rage at his own impotence stinging through them.

And presently the old mother slipped out to him, a plate of food in one hand, a bucket of spring water in the other.

"Let Maw fix ye up, boy," she coaxed. "Then ye kin eat yer victuals. I hotted them up fer ye."

Obediently he raised his head and gently she mopped away at his bruises. "Thet's a sightly cut over yore eye, son," she grieved.

"Tain't nuthin'," he shrugged indifferently. Then, flinging his arms wide, in a passion of despair: "I hain't got any chance, Maw—not agin them. Hit's allers been thet a-way."

"Ye ain't nuthin' but a boy, son," she encouraged, putting the plate into his lap. "Shouldn't wonder ef ye don't lick Lem some day."

"Not in time ter save Essie. Ye heerd whut he said?"

"I heerd," she nodded soberly. "An' he means hit, Lem does. He's hed them beady eyes on Essie a sightly while. I bin wonderin' how long he'd hold off." A pause. "I hain't able ter do much with Lem, son, but I bin doin' my best fer Essie."

"Pore Maw!" sympathized the boy gently, laying a hand upon one of her knotted ones. "It hain't much of a life fer ye."

Slow, difficult tears shimmered in her faded eyes.

"I've hed you," she dabbed at her eyes with a corner of the checked apron. "Ye bin the one thing good whut's happened ter me, boy. From the fust ye were happy an' gentle an' smilin' like—a dove in a nest of crows!"

"An' with jest about as much chance!" muttered the boy unhappily.

"Thet's right!" agreed Maw instantly. "Ye hain't got no chance hyar, son. All them things whut works agin ye hyar would work fer ye out in the big world. Thar's places whar gentleness an' kindness an' likin' things nice counts—but not with the Tollivers. An' I'm wantin' ye sh'd take Essie an' git. She don't belong hyar, anyways."

"I wouldn't git fur afore they'd ketch me," he pointed out, "an' then—"

"Lem'd kill ye," she acknowledged. "He air the killin' kind, Lem air. He kills jest from likin' ter. Ye wouldn't be the fust—" she stopped, lips closing upon the secret.

"He's killed afore?"

She nodded, a finger to her lips. "Ssh! He'd kill me ef he knew I told. He hain't got no nacheral feelin' fer me—none of them Tollivers has—not ez much ez a litter of kittens fer an old cat!"

"I hain't got a chance agin 'em," declared David sullenly.

"Leave hit ter Maw," she urged mysteriously. "Lem'll wait the month; preacher won't be by afore then. An' I'll find some way. Ye air the flower of the flock, David, an' I'm aimin' ter give ye a chance."

He hesitated uncertainly.

"I tell ye, I'll find some way ter manage," she insisted. "Ye air the flower of the flock . . ." she stopped, panting.

"Maw!" commanded a rough voice within.

"Comin'!" she scrambled up with incredible alacrity, hurrying inside.

Rising painfully, young David limped down across the field to a seat he had built for Essie beneath the shelter of a clump of trees.

"Essie!" he greeted in surprise, seeing a blur of white against the dark.

"David!" she flung herself into his arms, weeping. "Air ye hurted much? Seemed't every blow came whalin' down on my heart."

"I'm all right," he comforted, lips against her dark hair. "Hit's you I'm frettin' over, honey. Lem—"

"Lem won't never git me, David," she declared proudly. Then, significantly: "Ye air fergittin' the Bride's Leap. Ef thar hain't no way fer us ter git away, I'm allowin' ter try thet."

"Essie!" He caught her closer, his anguished fancy seeing the small, slight figure flutter from steep hillside to cruel rocks below.

"I'm lovin' ye, Dave," she urged, both arms tight around his neck. "Fust off I loved ye 'cause of them bein' all agin' ye. But lately I bin lovin' ye count o' ye bein' you."

"Honey!" said David tenderly, "I jest can't bear thinkin' of a single hair o' yer purty head bein' hurt."

"An' me—" she told him sobbingly. "I can't bear hinkin' of bein' married ter Lem—an' lovin' you."

A silence in the fragrant dark, David's thoughts upon Essie.

Essie . . . she was different from other mountain women, he decided, holding her close, his tenderness manifesting itself in the throbbing of his wrists, the moistness of his eyes. Finer,

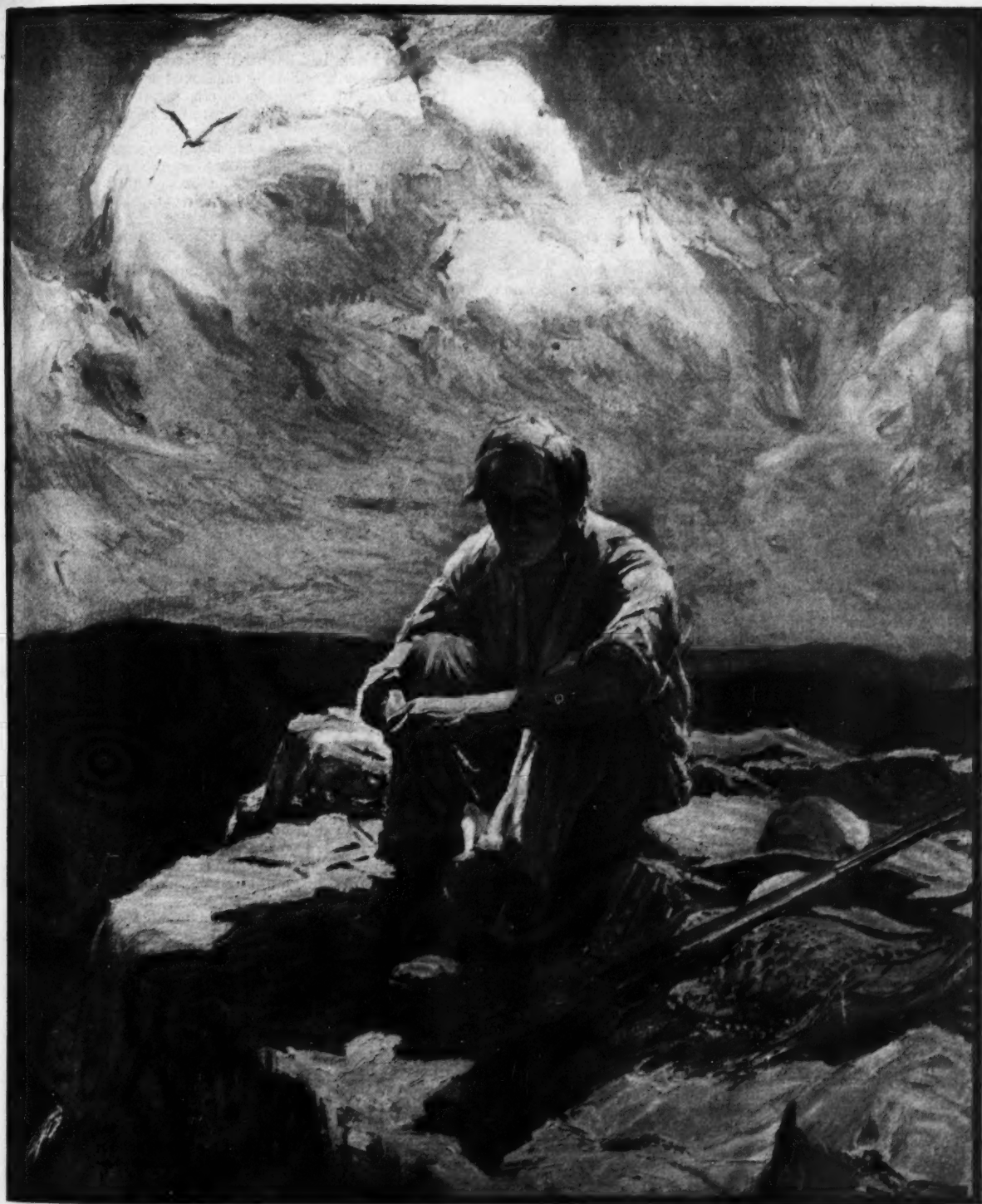


With a cry of anguish Essie snatched up David's rifle.

"You—Lem!" she said.

"Stand away or I'll shoot."

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"I clumb the highest hill I c'd find," said Dav'd, "an' sat thar, listenin' to the trees blowin' in the wind and watchin' the road whar it gits lost in the woods."

frailer, that was it. Her small heart-shaped face, the slenderness of her neck and wrists, even the slimness of her feet and ankles, stirred in him an immense pity and wish to protect. There was no girl on the mountains to compare with Essie—and Lem wanted her! Wanted Essie, who wasn't fitted for the rough life of the mountains, the toting of water, all the drudgery which was a natural accompaniment of their life. Whatever the unknown background behind her, she had not been born to such a life. That stranger, her father, who had unexpectedly died at their cabin—his clothes were finer than any of them had ever seen before. Even the clothing of the nine-year-old Essie, religiously

preserved by Maw, was of unfamiliar fineness—like Essie herself.

The boy sighed. He must get Essie safely away. She wouldn't marry Lem. She meant it, that allusion to the Bride's Leap. For all her apparent delicacy she possessed a steel-like determination. She would never marry Lem.

"Ef only I wuz full grown . . ." he said aloud.

"Ef only ye were," wistfully.

A brief pause.

"We hev got a month," reminded David with forced cheerfulness.

"Thet's so," agreed Essie hopefully. Then: "Reckon I better be gittin' back, David, or Lem'll be pickin' on ye agin."

"I'm stayin' hyar," said young David grimly. "I hain't sleepin' under the same roof with Lem tonight."

"Essie," said Maw Tolliver quietly, as the girl stepped lightly to the porch after leaving David, "come hyar, gal. I'm waitin' ter talk ter ye."

Obediently Essie dropped down to the rough boards of the floor beside her.

"Whar're they?" she whispered, shivering apprehensively.

"Listen—" returned Maw.

From within came a prolonged snoring.

"Nights they come from the still they hain't long awake," explained the old woman with bitter humor. "But I hain't carin'. When they air asleep then they can't pester nobuddy."

A silence followed, during which the girl's eyes grew heavy.

"Ye wanted ter talk about somethin'," she reminded restlessly.

With a start Maw dumped the ashes from her pipe.

"I wanted ter talk 'bout ye marryin' Lem." Then, feeling the girl stiffen in the shadow beside her, she put out a gnarled hand soothingly.

"Sho' now," she placated, "did ye think I were a goin' ter coax ye ter marry Lem? No, indeed! Why, gal, ef Lem air my own son, I'd ruther see ye dead than married ter him. I hain't ever hed no gals, Essie, but ye bin like my own gal ter me. An' ef I've raised six ter manhood, I hain't ever hed but one son, an' thet one, Dave. The rest—air jest black, snarlin', bad-tempered Tollivers. Dave, now, he's diff'runt. Ef you an' Dave air set on each other, then things air working out jest right."

"Right?" disputed Essie. "With Lem able ter whup any man on the mounting?"

"Hit's the way his pappy got me," said Maw thoughtfully, an undercurrent of bitterness in her quavering voice. "I wuz a sightly gal in those days—blue eyes, pink cheeks, yellor curls, an' a skin whiter'n milk. Weren't no better lookin' gal this side o' the mounting. I'd hed advantages too. My maw were a school marm come up hyar ter try an' bring eddication ter the mountings. Paw were young an' strong an' good lookin'. She married him thinkin' she c'd eddicate him—" A pause while she gave a sorry sound resembling a laugh. "Twarn't no use—he didn't aim ter change. She wuz the one as did the changin'."

Essie listened intently, swinging her slim, bare feet to and fro over the edge of the porch.

"Once . . ." said Maw vaguely, "she tried ter run away, but ye cain't git fur on bare feet. He brought her back, Paw did, an' she never tried hit again . . ." A pause. "When I wuz near grown, Bill Tolliver took a likin' ter me. I wuz a sightly gal; thar's others as would hev liked me ef they'd hed a chance, mebbe. But Bill Tolliver, he c'd lick any man this side o' the mounting. He wouldn't let no one even look at me."

She sighed, vaguely wistful. "Thar were one I fancied some—he kinder favored Dave. Quiet an' gentle like. Oncet he carried a bucket o' spring water fer me . . . an' the mounting were green an' purty thet day. But shucks—Bill Tolliver wouldn't hev let him set up ter me. I didn't blame him none fer not comin' round—Bill Tolliver would hev licked hell outer him . . ."

Again she sighed, a ghostly sigh stirring rose-leaves of memory. "Ef I'd ez much ez lifted my hand ter him, he'd hev come anyways," she confessed. "But I never lifted thet hand. I wuz young an' silly like, an' kinder set on the notion o' bein' Bill Tolliver's gal. Twarn't 'til afterwards, when I'd begun ter find out Bill Tolliver'd never use none of his strength fer nobuddy but hiffself, thet I begun ter understand how much thet other one hed meant ter me. Seemed like he'd allers called ter me . . . But he wuz queerlike, fond of birds, an' catchin' butterflies, an' wantin' ter lie outer nights watchin' the stars. So I picked Bill Tolliver, thinkin' I'd do better with him."

"What came o' him?" inquired Essie, slowing the restless movement of her feet in her interest.

"After I married Bill Tolliver, he went away from the mounting. I never thought of him much, only jest sometimes, ez wimmin will of a man they mought hev married. . . . Then some months afore Dave wuz born, word come ter his folks thet he wuz dead. He'd got hiffself an' eddication an' done well out in the world. An' someway, knowin' he wuz dead seemed ter bring it all back, an' ter bring him closer. I thought about him a lot then, wishin' I hed someway o' tellin' him I'd made a mistake. An'—" her voice grew awed as she sent a stealthy glance toward the open door—"when Dave come, mebbe because I'd thought of him so much, Dave favored him—thet other! From the fust he

weren't no black, bad-tempered Tolliver, an' I loved him fer it. But them—they hate him fer the same reason."

From behind a rift of clouds crossing the mountain summit a shaft of moonlight splashed down, twinkling briefly across the ploughed field.

"Gittin' late," said Maw bruskiy. She stood up, groaning at the protest of her rheumatic bones.

"Ye needn't be frettin' 'bout me, Maw," declared Essie earnestly. "I hain't aimin' ter marry Lem. I'd die afore I'd marry Lem."

"Thet's hit!" approved Maw exultantly. "Hit's easier, honey, ter face all yer trouble right out at the start than ter be eatin' yer heart out, year after year, a-knowin' ye made a powerful bad mistake."

"I reckon," agreed Essie soberly, following her within.

Days followed in which young David worked with the blind old horse in the tiny field planted with corn and buckwheat, the elder Tollivers away at the still on the mountain side, and Essie sitting on a fallen tree beside the field, sunbonnet low over her face, bare feet sticking out straight before her from under her scarlet dress, her eyes wide with brooding fear.

It hurt him unendurably, that silent fear, and inadequately he would attempt to comfort her.

"Don't, Essie," he would urge miserably, slacking the reins over old Dolly's thin back and coming to sit beside her while the horse rested gratefully. "Somethin'll turn up. Haint no call fer ye ter look thet a-ways."

"I hate Lem," Essie would sob despairingly. "I've hated him ever sence he whupped my puppy ter death fer hollerin' nights. Ever sence he used ter put me up high in the big tree an' leave me thar when I wuz too little ter git down."

"I hate him too." The boy's blue eyes would lift to a no less blue sky with vivid recollection of a bruised and beaten boyhood, and Lem as his chief persecutor. Always Lem had been the ringleader. Without his leadership the grudge they bore his young beauty and his difference might have diminished. "I hate him, too," he would repeat, hating the lagging youth which forbade his conquering Lem.

"Maw. . ." he appealed one still night when they sat together on the porch, her gnarled hands folded in the inevitable apron, "I cain't stand hit."

"Don't fret, boy," comforted Maw placidly, drawing on her pipe. "Thar'll be a way. You'll see! I cain't see it yet, but thar'll be a way. I feel it here—" she laid one hand upon her flat chest. "I hain't had my chance, but you—ye air the flower of the flock, Dave. I know ye air goin' ter git a chance, someways."

"Ef only we hed money," raged the boy. "Then ef I c'd reach the settlement I c'd mebbe hire a rig. . . ." His fancy, planning escape, died at realization of its impossibility.

"I hain't got any money," acknowledged Maw. "I hain't even seed a piece of money sence I come to this hyar cabin, nary one. An' I hain't got nuthin' ter sell fer money, an' no way ter sell it ef I did. But don't ye fret, son."

Her serenity daunted him, his protest against inaction dying in his throat as he wondered at her incomprehensible certainty.

There came then a day some two weeks later when one of the Tolliver boys arrived late to supper, palpably under the influence of excitement.

"I bin talkin' ter Bud Coleman," he announced importantly. "He sez the revenooers air thicker'n flies round abouts."

A clatter of knives and forks greeted this unsettling information.

"Thet so?" mused Pap Tolliver, wiping his plate with a piece of corn pone unconcernedly. "Looks like them pesky varmints jest nacherally has ter go pokin' thar noses inter whut don't concern them, noways. Hain't the corn oun? Hain't this a free country? Hain't we got a right ter do whut we want with oun?"

"You boys better lay low," counseled Maw, coffee-pot in hand, proceeding to fill a cracked cup for the late arrival.

Pap Tolliver sent a penetrating glance at her. "Hain't nobuddy goin' ter find our still less'n somebuddy tells," he drawled. "An' tain't exactly healthy up in these parts ter go givin' information ter revenooers."

"Thet's so," she acquiesced, putting a steaming dish of hominy on the table. "Reckon thet's so, Pap."

"Tain't no time fer us ter be layin' low jest now, anyways," cut in Lem maliciously, with a glance at Essie, "cause we'll be hevin' a weddin' hyar afore long, an' I'm fingerin' on hevin' a infare. Pete Hiller sez the circuit rider'll be long in a day or so at most. He's headed this way."

David's heart gave a sickening jerk. Essie dropped a plate to the floor and flew out of the door, sobbing, David taking an irresolute step after her.

(Continued on page 144)

The Coward

There is something about the blue envelop—the sign that a man's been "fired"—that takes the starch out of a hero. This story—about a newspaper man, by a former newspaper man—gives you a thought you can't help wondering about—and perhaps a new light on yourself, too.

By
Ben Ames Williams

Illustrations by

Edward L.
Chase

The little old man's heart dropped into his boots:
he was fairly white with fear.

LITTLE old Bob Dungan, his coat off, his sleeves rolled to the elbow so that they revealed the red-woolen underwear which he habitually wore, sat at his typewriter in the furthest corner of the noisy City Room and rattled off a cryptic sentence. He wrote:

"The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog."

Now this is not a piece of information calculated to interest more than a baker's dozen of the half million readers of a metropolitan daily such as that which Bob served. The sentence as a sentence has but one virtue; it contains all of the letters of the alphabet. That is all you can say for it. Nevertheless, having written the words, Bob studied them profoundly, ticking off with his pencil each letter, from A to Z, and when he was done, counted those that still remained.

"Nine," he said, half aloud. And he scratched his head. "Ought to get it under that." He put a fresh sheet in the typewriter and prepared to try again. To the casual eye of any one who might be watching from across the room, he looked like a very busy man.

As a matter of fact, this was exactly the impression Bob wished to convey. He was anxious to appear busy and indispensable. For little old Bob Dungan was desperately afraid of being fired.

A newspaper staff is built to meet emergencies. That means that, left to itself, it inevitably becomes top-heavy, and on days when news is slack, the City Room is half full of men waiting for an assignment that never comes. When such a condition develops, the veterans in the office know what will follow. Some fine morning, the publisher drifts down stairs and sees the idle men—idle because there is nothing for them to do. And that afternoon, the order comes to cut the staff, cut to the bone.

So faces once familiar begin to disappear. The latest comers are the first to go, and only unusual ability will save them. Then the less efficient among the regulars are dropped, and

finally, in drastic cases, those old-timers who have begun to slow down. There was once a Saturday afternoon when from a single City Room twenty-two men were discharged, and the work went

on, Monday morning, just the same. Men who have seemed indispensable disappear—and leave no more of a hole than your finger leaves in a bucket of water. The young reporters

take these episodes gaily, as a part of the game; those more experienced accept misfortune with what resignation they can muster. But in the case of a man

who has served the paper for ten or fifteen or twenty years, the moment has its black and tragic side.

Old Bob Dungan was wise enough to know the signs. Three weeks before two young reporters had disappeared. A week after, five men were "let go." Last Saturday seven old friends had stopped at his desk to say good-by. And this morning, his half-admitted apprehensions had been brought to focus. Fear had set its grip on him. . . .

Dade, the City Editor, a driver of a man who was himself driven by a fierce affection for the paper which he served, was standing at Bob's desk, and they were talking together when Boswell, the publisher, came in from the elevator. And Dade—the man had a kindly, human streak in him which some people never discovered—whispered out of the side of his mouth to Bob:

"Look busy, old man. For God's sake, look busy as hell!"

Then he went across to meet Boswell; and Bob began to write on his machine, at top speed, over and over again:

"Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party. Now is the time for all good men to come . . ."

The Coward

He shifted, after a while, to the other: "*The quick, brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.*" Meaningless enough; but Bob hoped, with all his trembling soul, that he was succeeding in looking busy. He was, as has been said, afraid of being fired.

Bob could not afford to be fired. He had been a newspaper reporter all his life, and always would be. His salary had always been small, and always would be. His savings were spasmodic, disappearing like snow patches on a sunny day before the occasional emergencies of life, and emergencies insisted on arising. Emergencies do arise, when a man has a family. Just now, for example, his wife was only two days out of hospital, and the bill unpaid. . . . No, he could not afford the luxury of being fired.

So fear scourged and shook him. It was physical; there were certain muscular and nervous reactions that went with it. His heels, tucked under his chair, felt naked and chilled by the little currents of air that circulated along the floor. His bowels were sick within him, as though there were an actual, ponderable weight in his mid-section. His ears, attuned to what went on in the room behind him, seemed unnaturally enlarged, and there were pricklings in his scalp.

He had known fear before. Such dull periods come to every newspaper office. But Bob had always pulled through, escaped discharge. He had worked at this same desk for a dozen years. . . . Had come here from the *Journal*, feeling a little proudly that he was taking an upward step, beginning at

last to climb. It had meant more money. Thirty-five dollars a week. He was getting forty, now. So little, yet enough to make a man a coward.

Bob had never been fired from any job. The process of discharge was cloaked, in his thoughts, with an awful mystery. Sometimes men found a note, in a blue envelop, in their mail boxes; sometimes Dade called them to him, spoke to them, explained the necessity which forced him to let them go. They took it variously; defiantly, calmly, humbly, as their natures dictated. But it had never happened to Bob. . . .

He was afraid, these days, to go to his box for mail lest the dreaded note be there; and when Dade stopped at his desk or called him across the room he cringed to his very soul with dread. He was, no doubt of it at all, an arrant and an utter coward.

So he sat, this morning, and wrote, over and over again:

"Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party. Now is the . . ." Or shifted, and tapped off: "*The quick, brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.*" He was still thus occupied when Dade called from his broad desk by the window: "Bob!"

The little old man looked fearfully around, and Dade beckoned. Bob's heart dropped into his boots; he was fairly white with fear. Perhaps Boswell had told Dade to let him go. . . .

Nevertheless, he faced the music. Got up and went across the room toward where the City Editor was standing. And he managed a smile. Beat down his panic and smiled.

Dade kept him waiting. The City Editor was giving some instructions to Ingalls, the City Hall man. Bob, his thoughts misted and confused by his own apprehensions, nevertheless heard what Dade was saying, and subconsciously registered and filed it away.

" . . . going to start something," Dade explained to Ingalls. "Mr. Boswell is interested, so you want to get results. The Building Department has been slack. Not inspectors enough, maybe. Fire Department, too. There were two girls caught in that fire in the South End ten days ago. Got out, I know, but it was luck. We're going to cover every fire, from now on. Going to watch the fire-escapes and the fire-doors and get the goods on this bunch, if they've been falling down. You keep it to yourself, but see what you can dig up. There must be stuff filed, up there. I'll let you know. . . . Don't make any breaks till you hear from me, but keep on the job. . . ."

Bob listened, finding some relief from his own apprehensions in doing so. "Another crusade. . . ." he thought, idly. Abruptly, Dade dismissed Ingalls and turned to him, and Bob turned pale, then colored with relief when he understood that Dade simply wished to give him an assignment.

"Jack Brenton," Dade said, in the staccato sentences which were his habit. "We hear his wife has run away from him. He lives out in Hanbridge. Here's the address. I sent the district man over. He says Brenton's drunk. Threatened to shoot him. You'll have to handle him right. Jack's a bruiser, looking for trouble. Ask him if it's true his wife's gone. Ask him who she went with, and why, and what he's going to do about it. Telephone me."

Bob nodded. "All right," he said quickly. "I'll 'phone in." He swung back to his desk for coat and hat, eager to be away, eager to be out of the office and away from present peril.

Outside the building, Bob headed for the subway. He had no qualms at the thought of Jack Brenton and his drunken pugnacity. Bob was an old hand, a good leg man, a competent reporter. He had handled angry husbands many times. He could handle Brenton.

Yet he might have been forgiven for being afraid to encounter Jack Brenton. The man was a professional pugilist of some local note, and his record was bad. He had once, by ill luck, killed an opponent in the ring; he was known to possess a sulky temper that flamed to murderous heat, and it was said of him that when he was in his cups, he was better left alone. . . . He was in his cups this morning. Bob knew this as soon as he heard the other's sulky shout that answered his knock at the apartment door. The prize-fighter yelled: "Come in!"

And Bob went in.

Inside the door, there was a little hallway, with a bathroom opening off one side, and a living-room at the end. Brenton came into this passage from the living-room as Bob entered from the hall, and they met face to face. Brenton looked down at the little man; and he asked suspiciously:

Bob did not hesitate. He climbed the iron rail, kicked in a pane of glass and pushed the sash up.



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Bob, unafraid, laughed; and the prize-fighter could see that there was no fear in the little man's eyes.

"What're you after?"
"Dungan's my name," said Bob pleasantly. "I'm from the *Chronicle*."
He saw the other's scowl deepen. "I said what I'd do. . . .
Next damn reporter came out here. What you want, anyway?"
"I want to ask you a few questions. About your wife. . . ."
The pugilist dropped his hand on little Bob Dungan's shoulder.
His left hand. His right jerked into sight with a revolver; he thrust the muzzle of it into Bob's face. "You smell that," he cried, truculently. "I'll blow your damn head off."

Bob—laughed. "Why, that's all right," he replied. If he had squirmed, struggled, or even if he had been afraid, the other's drunken anger might have given him strength to shoot. There was very real and deadly peril in the situation. But Bob, unafraid, laughed; and the prize-fighter could see that there was no fear in the little man's eyes. "That's all right," said Bob. "Go ahead."

Brenton did not shoot. He hesitated uncertainly, his slow wits wavering. And Bob asked sympathetically:

"Did she treat you pretty bad?"

(Continued on page 152)

The EMPTY

A New Novel


By

Basil King

Illustrations by

James Montgomery

Flagg



"It's young Follett,"
Collingham said. "He's
shot one of the detectives."

THE guests went early. It was a relief to have them go. Not that they differed from other guests to whom Collingham Lodge was accustomed to open its doors, or that the dinner was less fastidiously good than Junia was in the habit of giving. Dinner and guests had both been up to form; and yet it was a relief when the last car glided from beneath the portico.

"Why do you suppose it is?"

Junia had asked this question so often of late that Collingham had ceased to try to answer it. Instead, he lighted a cigar and strolled to the open French window. He, too, found it a relief to relax in the company of his family, though less puzzled than Junia at the state of mind.

"Oh, come out!" Edith called from the terrace. "It's heavenly."

It was a soft, warm, velvety night, starlit and voluptuous. The air astir was just enough to carry the scents of roses, honeysuckle, mignonette, and new-mown hay. Except for the dartings of small living things and the occasional peep of a half-awake

bird, there was no sound but that of the plash of the fountains on the terraces. Edith went in for a light wrap for her mother; Collingham, his cigar in hand, dropped into the teakwood chair.

"It isn't our dinners only," Junia complained, when, with the wrap about her shoulders, she had settled herself in the wicker armchair she preferred; "it's all dinners. It's just as if people didn't enjoy them any more."

"Well, they don't," Edith half loungingly swung herself in a Gloucester hammock. "What we've got to learn, mother dear, is that entertaining, as we called it, was a pre-war habit which we've outlived in spirit, though we haven't quite come to the point in fact."

"There's something in that," Collingham agreed.

"And yet there's got to be hospitality," Junia reasoned. "You can't just live and die to yourself."

Edith swung lazily.

"Hospitality, yes; but isn't there a difference between that and entertaining?"

"If so, what is it?"

But before Edith could resume, the attention of all three was called by the tinkle of the telephone-bell in the library, which could be approached from the terrace through the drawing-room. With a muttered, "Who's ringing up at this time of night?" Collingham dragged himself in to answer it. The women remained silent, each listening to see if the call was for her.

"Yes? . . . This is Mr. Collingham. . . . Who? . . . Oh, it's you, Mr. Brunt? . . . Yes? . . . What did you say? . . ."

Y SACK

A Serious and Masterly Study of the American Family and Society as It Is Today

THE PEOPLE IN THE STORY:

LIZZIE FOLLETT; the strong-souled mother of Jennie, Teddy, Gladys and Gussie. Her husband, Josiah, had recently been discharged for incompetency from Collingham & Law, and died after fruitless efforts to find another job. Discouraged and disillusioned, she has finally become embittered in the struggle to meet life's problems.

JENNIE FOLLETT; an artist's model who has recently married young Bob Collingham against her inclinations, but has never lived with him. They have agreed to keep the marriage secret until Bob's return from South America.

TEDDY FOLLETT; Jennie's young brother who had been taking small sums of money from his employers, Collingham & Law, in his efforts to aid his mother. His conscience betrayed him to the detectives, Flynn and Jackman, and in a moment of uncontrollable terror, he shoots them as they approach his hiding place in the marshes of Hoboken.

(ROBERT) BRADLEY COLLINGHAM; the head of the banking house of Collingham & Law, the employer of young Teddy Follett; also the father of Bob—who is (unknown to him) married to Teddy's sister, Jennie.

MRS. (JUNIA) COLLINGHAM; having unexpectedly learned from Jennie of her marriage to her son, and believing that the *mesalliance* could cause only disaster, she has offered Jennie \$25,000 to furnish Bob reason for a divorce. She has just purchased Hubert's painting "Life and Death" in the belief that Jennie had posed for the nude figure in it.

EDITH COLLINGHAM; the daughter of Bradley and Junia; a young woman of independent thought, who is in love with a teacher, Mr. Ayling—whom her father opposes because he is outside of her social class.

HUBERT WRAY; an artist friend of the Collinghams; he has long been attracted to Jennie, and has occasionally used her as a model; now (not knowing of her marriage) he is urging her to pose for the figure for his next painting.

'Killed?' Who's killed? . . . Not Flynn the detective, who comes in and out of the bank? . . . Indeed! Dear me! Dear me! Where was it? . . . Who did it? . . . Not that boy? . . . Oh, my God! . . . What happened? . . . Tell me quickly. . . . 'Over beyond Hoboken!' Yes? Yes? . . . And they've got him? . . . In the brig? That's the Breckenwood jail, isn't it? . . . Jackman, too, did you say? . . . 'Wounded, but not killed.' . . . Badly? . . . Oh, the poor fellow! . . . In the hospital? . . . That's right. . . . Has anyone communicated with his family? . . . Good! Good! . . . And Flynn's wife? . . . Oh, the poor woman! . . . And the boy's family? . . . You don't know anything? Then no one has informed his mother? . . . Not that you know of. . . . I see . . . He's to be brought into court to-morrow morning. . . . Poor little devil! . . . Oh, I know he doesn't deserve pity, but—but I can't help it, Brunt. His father was with us so long and—and one thing and another! . . . No; I'll appear in court myself and see what I can do for him. . . . Good-night, then. I'll see you in the morning."

"What boy can that be?" Junia whispered, as her husband hung the receiver in its place.

"I'm sure I don't know—unless—unless it's the Follett boy."

"Oh, I hope not. It would make such awful complications."

They waited for Collingham to come and tell them his plainly thrilling news, but he remained in the library.

"It would make complications," Edith ventured, "if it proved to be young Follett—with Bob in love with his sister."

Junia spoke not so much from impulse as from what she felt to be inspiration.

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JAMES MONTGOMERY FLACE

"Daddy, what in the world has happened? Who is it that has killed some one?"

"He's more than in love with her. He's married to her."

"Mother!"

"Yes; he was married to her a few days before he sailed. I've known it all along."

Edith was breathless.

"Did he tell you?"

"No; she did."

"She? The Follett girl? Why, mother!"

Junia rose. She knew that if her suspicions were correct, she would have things to do before she slept.

"Go to bed now, dear; and I'll come to your room and give you the whole story. In the meantime, I may have to tell your father."

"You mean to say that he doesn't know?"

"No; not yet. I've been rather hoping that before I told him Bob would—would see his way out of the mess."

"He'll never do that, never in this world—not according to what he's said to me."

The Empty Sack

"Oh, well, he didn't know everything then that he'll have to know now. But go and say good-night to your father, and I'll come up by the time you're in bed."

"Mother, you're amazing!" Edith spoke more in awe than in admiration; but she obeyed orders by going to her father.

She found him still sitting in the chair by the telephone, bowed forward, his elbows on his knees, and his forehead in his hands. When he lifted his haggard eyes toward her, she stood still.

"Daddy, what in the world has happened? Who is it that has killed some one? We couldn't help hearing that much."

He raised himself.

"It's—it's young Follett. He's been stealing money from the bank, and now he's shot one of the detectives who heard he was hiding in a cabin out on the Hoboken marshes. They'd sent out a description of him to the suburban stations. And only to-day I told his sister that I'd call the thing off and give him another chance."

"She came to see you?"

"She came to see me."

"Then you did what you could, didn't you?"

"I did what I could—then." In spite of the emphasis on the final word, he slapped his knee with new conviction. "I've done what I could all through. It's no use saying I haven't, because I have. There's just so much you can do, and you can't do any more. You can't make a business a home for indigent old gentlemen—now, can you?"

He sprang to his feet.

"No; I don't suppose you can," she assented. "But I do wish you'd talk to Mr. Ayling sometime, daddy. He seems to see all these things from new points of view—"

He was pacing about the room very much like Max in moments of agitation.

"Oh, new points of view! There's only one point of view, I tell you, and that's the one on what we've made the country prosperous."

She smiled, wistfully.

"Prosperous for some."

"Well, that's better than prosperous for nobody, isn't it?"

She said good-night to him then, for the reason that she herself was so stirred that she needed seclusion in which to think these strange things over. That Bob should have married Jennie Follett was a shock in itself; but that through his wife he should now be involved in this frightful tragedy was something that her mind found it hard to take in. It was the first time that she had ever come so close to the more terrible happenings in life.

Meanwhile, Junia, overhearing what was said, reconstructed her plan of campaign. In common with great generals, she possessed the faculty of rapid revision as events took place differently from the way she had expected. By the-time she heard Edith go up-stairs she had foreseen the line of action which the new situation forced on them.

Collingham was still lashing about the library when she appeared on the threshold. Her calmness arrested him. In a measure, it soothed him. It was the kind of juncture in which she always knew what to do, and he had confidence in her judgment. When she said, "Sit down, Bradley; I've something to say," he obeyed her quietly, relighting his cigar. As she, too, sat down, Max or Dauphin would have noted in her the aura of authority which a master wears when about to lecture a school-boy.

"I've something startling to tell you, Bradley; but I want to say beforehand that you mustn't get worked up, because I see a way out."

Taking his cigar from his lips, he looked at her sidewise. His expression said, "What's it going to be now?"

"What I've heard you telling Edith about this young Follett killing a detective concerns us more closely than you may think, because Bob is married to his sister."

He laid his cigar on an ash-tray, swung round to the table between them, clasped his fingers, and leaned on his outstretched elbows. His tone was quiet, even casual.

"When did he do that?"

"Just before he sailed."

"Then I'm through with him."

"Oh, no, you're not, Bradley! He's your son, whether he's married anyone or not."

"I can't help his being my son, but I can help having anything more to do with him."

"Listen, Bradley. This whole thing is going to be in the papers in the course of two or three days; and you must come through it with honors. It's perfectly simple to do it, and win everyone's respect and sympathy. In addition to that you can

get Bob's devoted affection, and you know how much that means to us all."

To Collingham, it meant so much that he listened to her attentively, with eager eyes. In Bob's marriage, with its attendant circumstances, they had obviously received a shock. All Marillo Park, as well as the public in general, would know it to be a shock, and would be watching to see how they took it.

Now, the thing for the Collinghams was to accept the situation with a great, big generous heart. They were to open their arms to Bob, and back him loyally in the combination of difficulties he had to swing. But he himself must swing them. Junia laid emphasis on that. By direct action, they couldn't intervene. They could only make it possible for him to act directly on his own responsibility. He had married a wife whose family was in trouble. They, the Collinghams, would not share that trouble, but they would help him to share it, since he had brought on himself the necessity for doing so.

To accomplish this, Junia suggested sending to Bob a cablegram covering the following five points: The Follett boy was in jail charged with murdering a detective; Bob should publish at once his marriage to this boy's sister; he should return to New York by the first convenient steamer; his father was placing ten thousand dollars to his account, and, when that was used, would place more; he was also ready if instructed by Bob to engage the best counsel in New York to defend the boy.

"That will take care of everything till he gets here," Junia concluded, "and, in the mean time, we can't do better, it seems to me, than go up as we always do at this time of year to our camp in the Adirondacks. This house can be kept open for Bob when he arrives, and Gull can stay with one of the motors to run him in and out of town."

"And what are we to do about the girl?"

"Nothing. That isn't for us to take up. We must leave it to Bob. If he ever brings her to us as his wife—but, then, he never may."

"What makes you think so?"

Her superb eyes covered him with their fine, audacious, womanly regard.

"I'd tell you, Bradley, if—if I didn't think there are things that had better not go into words, even between you and me. Whatever Bob discovers will be his own affair. You and I had best know as little as possible. We can back Bob up, and that's all we can do. Everything else he will have to work out for himself. By the time he's done that, he'll be a grown-up man. It's possible he's needed something of the sort to develop him."

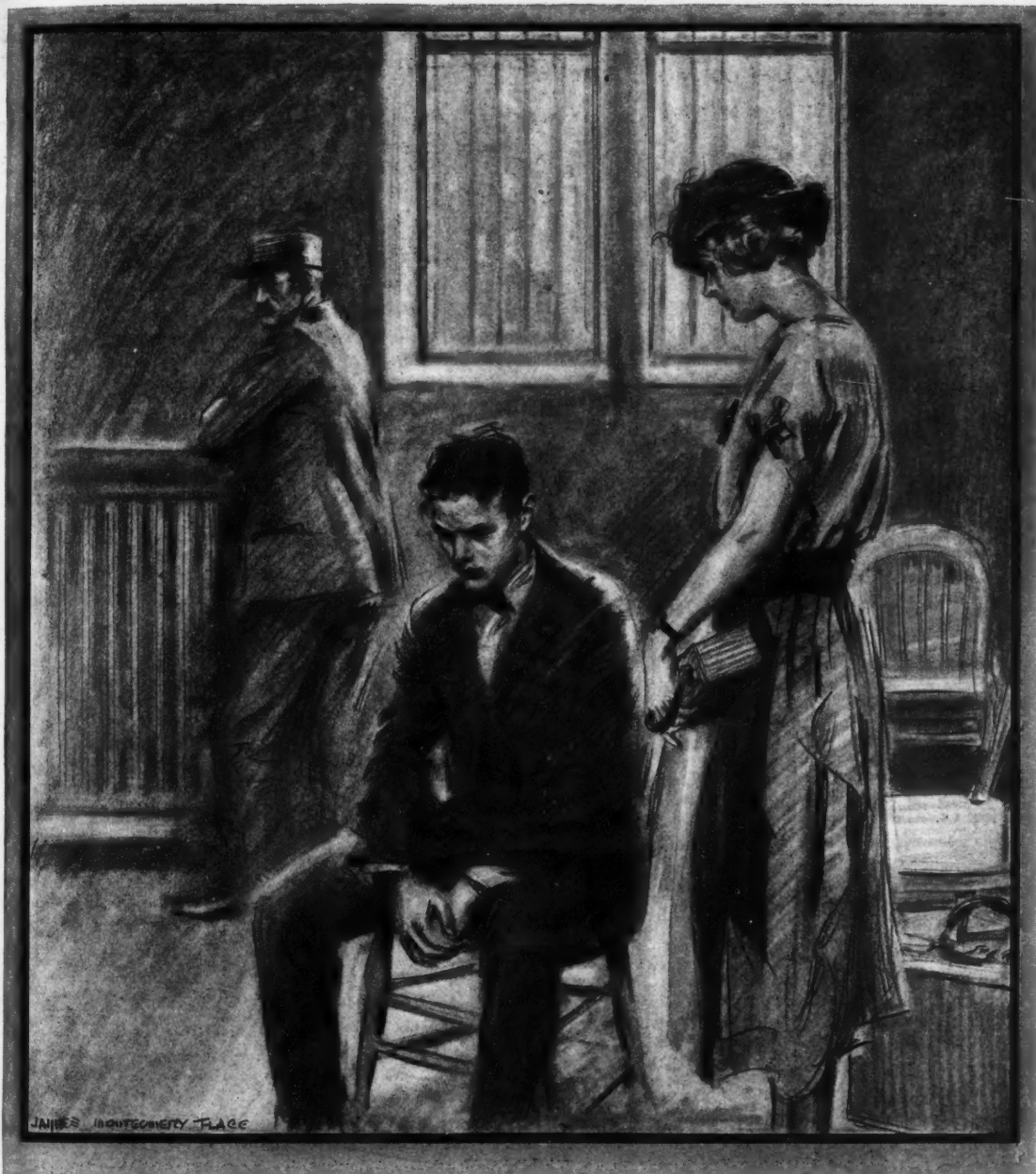
So Collingham telephoned his cablegram to Bob, and went to bed comforted. Next morning, on arriving at the bank, he found Junia's counsels supported by the best opinion among his co-workers. That is, he changed his mind as to going to the court in Breckenwood for the first hearing of the Follett boy, or otherwise expressing himself toward the Follett family. He had given Bob the means of doing whatever needed to be done, and Bob had the cable at his disposition. To go to the court, or to express sympathy in any way, would, according to Bickley, be dangerous to discipline. Feeling in the bank was extremely hostile to young Follett, and it was better that it should remain so. The bank employee's cast of mind, so Bickley said, was not revolutionary or rebellious against acknowledged rights. By sheer force of habit, it was schooled to reverence for life and property. The principle of ownership being holier to it than any tenet of religion, the Follett boy could not be looked upon otherwise than as an enemy of mankind, and this was as it should be.

While Collingham thus weighed the counsels offered him at the bank, Gussie Follett was blindly making her way homeward from Corinne's with a paper so folded in her hand as not to display its head-lines. She had gone to her work with comparative cheerfulness, since, on the previous day, Jennie had been assured by no less an authority than Mr. Collingham himself that Teddy should not be sent to jail. So long as he was not sent to jail, they would be free from public comment, and free from public comment they could "manage somehow." Managing somehow being an art in which they had gained authority, they were not afraid of that, even though it involved parting with the one great asset against calamity, the house.

Gussie's first intimation of bad news came when, on entering the shop, she found the four or five other girls huddled round Corinne. Her appearance made them start as if she was a ghost. Her own heart sank at that, though she hailed this shudder with a laugh.

"Say, girls, is this the big reel in 'The Specter Bride'?"

Corinne, whose real name was Mamie Callaghan, emerged from a miniature forest of upright metal rods crowned with hats



"I suppose—I suppose mother feels pretty bad—over me," Ted forced himself to say. "No, she doesn't," Jennie replied. "She told me to say to you that you were not to be sorry for anything you'd done, no matter how they punished you."

at various roguish angles. A dark, wavy-nosed woman of cajoling Irish witchery, she could hardly keep the prank from her voice even at such a time as this.

"So, Gussie, you don't know! Well, some one's got to break it to you, and I guess it'll have to be me."

Corinne let her see it, and the work was done. Gussie couldn't read beyond the head-lines with their "Robbery" and "Murder" in italic capitals, but she grasped enough. The snapshot of Teddy taken in the road, just as he had been dragged, a mass of slime, out of the morass, made her reel backward as if about to fall; but when Eily O'Brien sprang to her support, she waved her away gently. She was not going to faint. Her physical strength wouldn't leave her, whatever else was gone.

"I'm—I'm going home," was all she said, crushing the paper against her breast.

"Oh, Gus, lemme go with you!" Eily had begged; but this kindness, too, Gussie put away from her.

She could go alone, and alone she went, with one consuming thought as she sped along.

"Oh, momma! Poor momma! This'll about finish her."

And yet when she entered the living-room her mother was sitting, calm and serene, while Mr. Brunt told the tale of the Hoboken marshes. Jennie, white, tearless, terrified, crept up to Gussie, and the two clung together as their mother said in her steady voice,

"So I understand that only one of them is dead—the Irish one."

Mr. Brunt assented.

"Yes; Flynn; the Irish one."

"I'm not surprised. I told him when he was here the other day that what he called 'law and order' would bring him to grief, as they bring most of us, though I didn't expect it to be so soon. And my son, you say, is in jail?"

"At Breckenwood."

"They'll try him, I suppose."

"I'm afraid so."

"And then they'll send him to the chair." Mr. Brunt didn't answer. "Oh, you needn't be afraid to speak of it. I know they will. I'm not sorry. Teddy will be sorry, of course—till it's over. But I'd rather he'd suffer a little now and be done with it than go

through the hell of years his father and I have had. If there was going to be any chance for him, it would be different; but there's no chance, not the way the world is organized now."

The girls crept forward together.

"Mamma darling—"

But Lizzie resumed calmly.

"Where there's nothing but government by the strong for the strong, people like ourselves must go under. You'll go under, too, Mr. Brunt. You belong to the doomed class. The working man will soon be getting share and share alike with the capitalist, and the White Collar crowd will be kicked about by both. If we had the pluck to fight as the working man has fought, we might save something even now; but we haven't, and so there's no hope for us. Law and order have us by the throat, and we must suffer till they strangle us. Well, my boy will soon be out of it—thank God!—and all I ask is to follow him."

When Mr. Brunt got himself to the door, Jennie went with him, as she had done with Flynn and Jackman two days earlier. She did this in the dazed condition of a woman who performs some little act of courtesy during shipwreck, while waiting for the vessel to go down.

"You must excuse my mother, Mr. Brunt. Ever since my father died, her mind's been unsettled, and we don't know what to make of her."

But Mr. Brunt's demeanor did not encourage conversation.

Turning to reenter the house, Jennie felt again that access of new strength which had come to her repeatedly during the past few days. It was as if resources of her being never taxed before were now offering themselves for use. What she had to do was in the forefront of her thought rather than what some one else had done. What some one else had done was already in the past. That was made for her and couldn't be helped, whereas her own duties imperatively summoned her to look ahead.

"Teddy will need a suitcase of clean things," was the direct expression of these thoughts, before she had recrossed the threshold.

Having said this aloud to Gussie, Gussie's mind could also tackle the minor concrete details to the exclusion of the bigger considerations involved in Teddy's plight. That the honest, loving, skylarking boy whom they had grown up with could be a thief and a murderer was something the intelligence rejected as it rejected dreams. They could therefore take the new straw



As Jennie watched for his coming, all her thoughts were focused in speculation as to how herself, "whether he's sorry

suitcase, which had once been a family present to Gussie, and which she had never used, pack it with Teddy's other suit and the necessary linen, as if he were really at Paterson or Philadelphia.

"How shall we get it to him?" Gussie asked, when the work was done.

"I'll take it," Jennie answered, "if you'll stay and look after mamma."

"Mamma won't need much looking after—the way she is."

"Well, that's one comfort anyhow. With this to go through with, I'm glad her mind's not what it used to be."

So, stunned and dry-eyed, they caught on to the new conditions by doing little perfunctory things, consoling and helping each other.

XXI

TEDDY'S first night in a cell was more tolerable than it might have been, for the reason that his faculties seemed to have stopped working. As nearly as possible he had become an inanimate thing, to be struck, pulled, hustled, and chucked wherever they chose. Not only had he no volition but little or no sensation. A



through the grasses. Oaths, obscenities, and laughter accompanied every grotesque accident, as one man fell with the weedy tangle about his feet, or another went knee-deep into swamp. The very fear of "a dose of lead" intensified their excitement, till, as they caught sight of him, a helpless thing with face hidden in the mud, they gave vent to a yell of satisfaction.

They didn't let him rise; they didn't so much as pull him to his feet. They dragged him by his collar, by his hair, by his arms, by his legs, by anything they could seize, kicking, beating, and cursing him. He made no outcry; he didn't speak a word. For aught they knew, he might be drunk or insane or dead. Only once, when a man kicked him in the face, was he powerless to suppress a groan. Otherwise, he was just a sodden lump of flesh as, now head first, now feet first, now with face upward, now with face downward, he was tugged and tumbled and hurtled and rolled over the five hundred yards of slime between the spot where they had caught him and the road.

There he had a new experience. He learned what it was not only to be out-

he would approach her. "I'll know by the first look in his eyes," she kept saying to he married me or not."

dead body or a sack of flour could hardly have been more lost to all sense of rebellion or indignity.

It was not that he didn't suffer, but that suffering had reached the extreme beyond which it makes no further impression. Nothing registered any more—no horror, no brutalities, no curses or kicks. As far as he could take account of himself the Teddy Follett even of the shack had been left behind in some vanished world, while the thing that had hands and feet was a clod unable to resent the oaths and blows and flings to and fro which were all it deserved.

Once he had heard that shout "I see him!" in the road, he had been like an insect paralyzed by terror, that doesn't dare to move. He had lain there till they came and got him. It was not fear alone that pinned him to the spot; his bodily strength had given out. For forty-eight hours, he had eaten but little and drunk only the two glasses of water in the pastry shop. Though he had slept the first night, the second had been passed in a fevered, intermittent doze. Furthermore, the agony of approaching suicide had drained his natural forces.

So he lay still while the hue and cry of the man-hunters quickened and waxed behind him.

He could feel their fury growing as they slipped and slithered

side the human race but to be held as its foe. Already, while still far out on the marsh, he had heard the yells: "Kill him! Kill him! Kick the skunk to death!" But when actually surrounded by these howling, screaming, outraged citizens, with their teams and motor-cars banked in the roadway, he tasted the peculiar astonishment of the man who has always been liked when assailed by a storm of hatred. While the three or four police, who, by this time, had appeared, did their best to defend him, men fought with each other to get at him. A well-dressed girl of not more than eighteen reached over the shoulder of one of the police and struck him on the head with her sunshade. An elderly woman squeezed herself near him and spat in his face.

"Ah, say, people," one of the police called out, "give the young guy a chanst. Can't you see he's on'y a kid?"

"Kid be damned!" came the response. "Say, fellows, here's the telegraph-pole! Let's lynch him!"

"Lynch him! Lynch him! String him up!"

Teddy didn't care whether they lynched him or not. In as far as he could form a wish he wished they would; but then he was past forming wishes. They could string him up to the telegraph-pole or burn him alive just as they felt inclined; for he had traveled beyond fear.

The Empty Sack

Just then the crowd parted, the police-van drove up, and his protectors dragged him to its shelter. Even then, there was a new sensation in store for him. The parting of the crowd showed Flynn lying by the roadside, also waiting for a van. He was on his back, his knees drawn up, his mouth dropped open. Waistcoat and shirt had been torn apart, and Teddy saw a red spot.

He started back. Except for the groan when he had been kicked in the face, it was the only time he opened his lips.

"I didn't do that!" he cried, so loud that a jeer broke from the crowd.

A policeman shook him by the arm.

"Say, sonny, you didn't do that?"

Appalled by the sight of the dead man, Teddy could now do no more than stupidly shake his head.

"Then who did? Tell us that."

But the boy collapsed, his head sagging, his knees giving way under him. When he returned to consciousness, he was lying in the dark, jolting, jolting, jolting, on the floor of the police-van.

At the station he was pulled out again. He could stand now, and walk, though not very well. Hands supported him as he stumbled up the steps, and into a room where a man in uniform sat behind a desk, while three or four police and half a dozen unexplained hangers-on stood about idly.

"A live one," the policemen who led Teddy called out, jocosely, as they approached the desk.

"Looks like a dead one," the man behind the desk replied, with the same sense of humor. "Looks like he'd been dead and buried and dug up again."

The allusion to Teddy's hatless, mud-caked appearance raised a laugh.

The man behind the desk dipped his pen in the ink-bottle and drew up a big ledger.

"Name?"

Teddy could just articulate. "Edward Scarborough Follett."

"Gee whiz! Guess you'll have to spell it out."

Teddy spelled slowly, as if the letters were new to him. Having done this, he was asked no more questions. Explanations came from the officer who had "run him in," and who produced the automatic pistol picked up on the floor of the shack. When it was stated in addition that Teddy was charged with shooting and killing Peter Flynn, whom all of them knew and to whom they were bound by ties of professional solidarity, the boy felt the half-friendly indifference with which the spectators had seen him come in change to sullen hostility.

The formulas fulfilled, he was seized more roughly than before, to be half led, half pushed, along a dim hall and down a dimmer flight of steps to a worn stone-flagged basement pervaded by darkness and a smell of disinfectants. The corridor into which they turned was long and straight and narrow like a knife-cut through a cheese. On the left a blank stone wall was the blanker for its whiteness; on the right, a row of little doors diminished down the vista to the size of pigeon-holes. Pressed close to the square foot of grating inset in each door was a human face eager to see who was coming next, while the officer was greeted with howls of rage or whining petitions or strings of ugly words.

They stopped at the first open door, and after one glance within Teddy started back.

"Don't put me in there!"

The cry was involuntary, since he knew he would be put in there in any case.

"Ah, go in wid you!"

A shove sent him over the threshold with such force that he fell on the wooden bunk which was all the dog-hole contained, while the door clanged behind him.

All that night he lay in a stupor induced by misery. No one came near him; no food or drink was offered him. Thirst made him slightly delirious, which was a relief. Now and then, when his real consciousness partially returned he muttered, half aloud:

"I didn't do it. My hand might have done it—but that wasn't me."

The crepuscular light of morning was not very different from the darkness of night, but it brought his senses back to him sluggishly. Bruised as he was in body, he was still more bruised in mind, and could render to himself no more than a vague account of what had happened yesterday. When a tin of water and a hunk of bread were mysteriously pushed into the cell, he consumed them like an animal, lying down again on the bunk. Without water for a wash, his face and hair were still caked with the mud, which also stiffened his clothing.

"My God, what's that?"

Not having seen him before, the guard who summoned him to court was startled by the apparition that crawled to the threshold

of the cell when the door was unlocked. The semblance to a boy was little more exact than that of a snow man to a man.

"Ah, my God! Sure you can't go into court like that. They wouldn't know you was a human bein' let alone a prisoner. Wait a bit, and I'll get you somethin' to wash up in."

There followed a little rough kindness, scouring and brushing and combing the lad into something less like a monstrosity. Teddy submitted as a child does, and with a child's indifference to cleanliness.

So, too, he submitted in court, hardly knowing where he was, or the significance of these formalities. Apart from the relief he got from his own reiterations, "I didn't do it, I didn't do it," the proceedings were a blur to him. When he was led out again down more steps, along more corridors, and cast into another stale and disinfected cell, he took it with the same brutish insensibility. He didn't know that the new cell was in that part of the House of Detention known as Murderers' Row, nor did he heed the hoarse questions whispered through the next-door grating, and which he could barely catch as they stole along the wall.

The rattle of keys, and the clanging of the door! He looked up from the bunk on the edge of which he was sitting listlessly.

"Lady to see you!"

This guard was young, smart, debonaire, with a twinkle in his eye, and the first who didn't treat a comrade's murderer with instinctive animosity. Teddy got up and followed him in the stupefied bewilderment with which he had done everything else that day. Lady to see him! The words seemed to refer to something so far back in his history that he could hardly recall what it was. Once upon a time there had been a mother, a Jennie, a Gussie, and a Gladys; but they were now remote and shadowy.

Along corridors, up steps, and then along more corridors he tramped, till they stopped at an open door—and there he saw Jennie. In a room unspeakably bare and forbidding in spite of a table and half a dozen chairs she waited for him with a smile. He, too, did his best to smile, but his lower lip, swollen with the kick that had caught him in the mouth, made the effort nothing but a rictus.

For this Jennie had been prepared by the snapshot in the paper. All the while she had been on the way to him she had been saying to herself that she must show no sign of horror or surprise. Even though she would follow the cue of her poor demented mother and pretend that he was in prison as a martyr, she would take no pitying or tragic note. She went forward, therefore, and threw her arms about him with the same offhand, unsentimental pleasure which she would have shown in meeting him after a brief absence at any time.

"You darling Ted! We're so glad to have found you. I thought I'd just run down and bring you some clean clothes."

It was better done than she thought she had the strength for, perhaps because his need was greater than she had supposed possible. Could she have dreamt beforehand that Teddy would ever look like this, she would have screamed from fright. But now that he did, she rose to the fact, seemingly taking it for granted, actually taking it for granted, through some hitherto unsuspected histrionic force.

With this familiar presence beside him, Teddy's mind resumed functioning, possibly to his regret. Home was close to him again, while the loved faces came back to life.

"How's ma?"

The question was indistinct because, now that it came to making conversation, he found that his tongue was thickened in addition to his swollen lip. Jennie replied that their mother's health was never better.

"I suppose"—he balked a little but forced himself onward—

"I suppose she feels pretty bad—over me."

"No, she doesn't. She told me to tell you so." She was determined to speak truthfully in this respect, so that if their mother's dementia could do him any good, he shouldn't fail of it. "She told me to say that you were not to be sorry for anything you'd done, no matter how they punished you."

"Does she—does she know what I've done?"

She threw it off, as if casually.

"She knows all that's been in the papers; and I don't believe they've left anything out, not judging by the things they've said."

"How's Gussie? How's Gladys?"

Having answered these questions to the best of her ability, Jennie raised the subject of what she could bring him to eat. The guard who had remained in the room informed her that she could bring him anything, at which she promised to return next day. For the minute she was at the end (Continued on page 136)

A Word
of Advice to
the Love-lorn,
Told in a
Whimsical Story

The Man Who Wouldn't Be Told

By
Holworthy Hall

Illustrations by
Herbert M. Stoops

"I don't care
if it is five
years, Roger
—if you're
sure you
want me to
wait for
you."

AT the age of twenty-one, Henry Hunter, just admitted to the bar, was a sort of glorified office-boy for a firm of lawyers in Carthage, and Carthage was still a gangling town which looked as though it had grown too fast for its breeches. He fell in love with a girl who was considerably above him, and when her father explained the requirements, both social and financial, which stood in Hunter's path, he realized the necessity of quick action, so that he promptly resigned his clerkship, set up for himself and from the smallest room in the cheapest building on Main Street, began to fish for clients and also to conduct a wary speculation in town lots. And the girl's father, who was an arbitrary old soul and carried his dogmas on the tip end of his tongue, disapproved of every step in the procedure.

For the next five years Hunter received, and ignored, a greater volume of advice than even Lord Chesterfield wrote to his son, or a modern newspaper devotes to the love-lorn. He was described by his future father-in-law as one of those obstinate young men who can't be told anything; and he was told most frequently and with especial emphasis, that to dabble in real estate was pure gambling and sure ruin, and altogether inconsistent with the steady character which, in the case of a lawyer, no less than a clergyman or a doctor ought to be implied by the mere hanging-out of his shingle.

At fifty he was one of the leading citizens of Carthage and because he took sole credit for his own achievements, he had built up an affectionate regard for his own judgment and a broad intolerance for anyone who disagreed with it. He was an important lawyer and a very successful operator in real estate, and like most men who have made their own fortunes, he rather assumed that heaven must have singled him out as one of its authorized interpreters of the world. He was kindly and courteous, but there wasn't a subject from realty to railroading and from arithmetic to art on which he didn't have a pretty strong conviction and a great willingness to express it, and if

anybody's toes got stepped on Mr. Hunter simply argued that the toes shouldn't have been there in the first place.

You may imagine his reactions, then, when a boy of twenty-two, fresh from the law-school, bitten by the germ of authorship and with neither family nor income, presented himself to ask for the hand of Miss Nancy Hunter, aged seventeen and deep-eyed with her first illusions. The boy went back to the lawn, where Nancy was waiting apprehensive, under the bridal-wreath, and there his dramatic instincts overcame him. He put his arm round her and swore to the stars that, all for the sake of Nancy, he would set the universe on its beam ends if that was what she wanted, but he didn't intend to let any man talk to him as though he were an infant and get away with it.

Nancy was impressed and thrilled, but she had inherited a slightly practical turn of mind and even as she clung to him she inquired what he was going to do about it.

He laughed bitterly.

"Well, do you know what he *wants* me to do? Practise law and save some money and then come around again in about five years, or maybe fifty; I don't know. I *told* him I only went to law-school because I had a free scholarship; I *told* him I didn't like it and I'm no good at it; I *told* him I want to write plays—and that's what he said! He said I'd be a short-sighted fool if I didn't capitalize my education; he said—oh, I couldn't begin to tell you *half* he said."

She had never looked more adorable to him, never more like an earthly angel, than when she stood against the background of bridal-wreath and looked up at him with utter confidence.

"Well," she said, with an imperious movement of her blond little head, "if I were a man and I wanted to be a playwright, I'd just go and be one, no matter what *anybody* said."

Roger gazed at her soberly.

"Oh, no, you wouldn't—not if you wanted *all* I want. He thinks artists and writers and people like that are just plain nuts. Well, I can't afford to have him think I'm a nut, can I? I should

say not! He wants me to start in as a clerk in one of the old firms; he says he'd take me into his own office, only it wouldn't be quite fair to either one of us. So he says he'll keep an eye on me, and just as soon as I make good somewhere else, then he'll take me in with him, and after that it'll only be a question of time—so he says." And Roger emitted a brief, guttural sound, to convey an extreme of dissatisfaction.

She put out both her hands to him.

"Then I don't care if it is five years, Roger, or fifty, either!" Here, because she couldn't help being a woman, she dropped her eyes. "That is," she added demurely, "if you're sure you—want me to wait for you."

It cost him very little effort to convince her, and then they sat down together on a marble garden-bench, and he repeated in detail his vast aversion to the law and every branch of it, starting with torts and ending with champerty and maintenance.

"But never you mind that," he said sternly. "If I've got to do this thing, I've got to—that's all. If he insists I've got to practise law, why"—he sighed gustily—"why. I suppose I'd better do it. That is, I'll make a bluff at it in the daytime, to please your father, but at night—" He rose and walked a few steps apart, while Nancy, breathless, watched him. "You know," he said, turning slowly back to her, "I can see the drama in every little thing that goes on around me. I can see it, and I can feel it, and I've got to write it. Some day, I'll be free to do what I want to. Just now, I'll be a lawyer in the daytime, because it wouldn't pay us to have your father down on me, but at night I'm going to write plays. And when I've written a good one and sold it, and when I've got money, I'll bet he won't care whether I got it from the law or the stage; he'll only see I'm perfectly competent to handle my own affairs; and after that he'll keep his hands off, and—" he sat down beside her again and his voice softened—"and we'll be awfully happy—won't we, dear?"

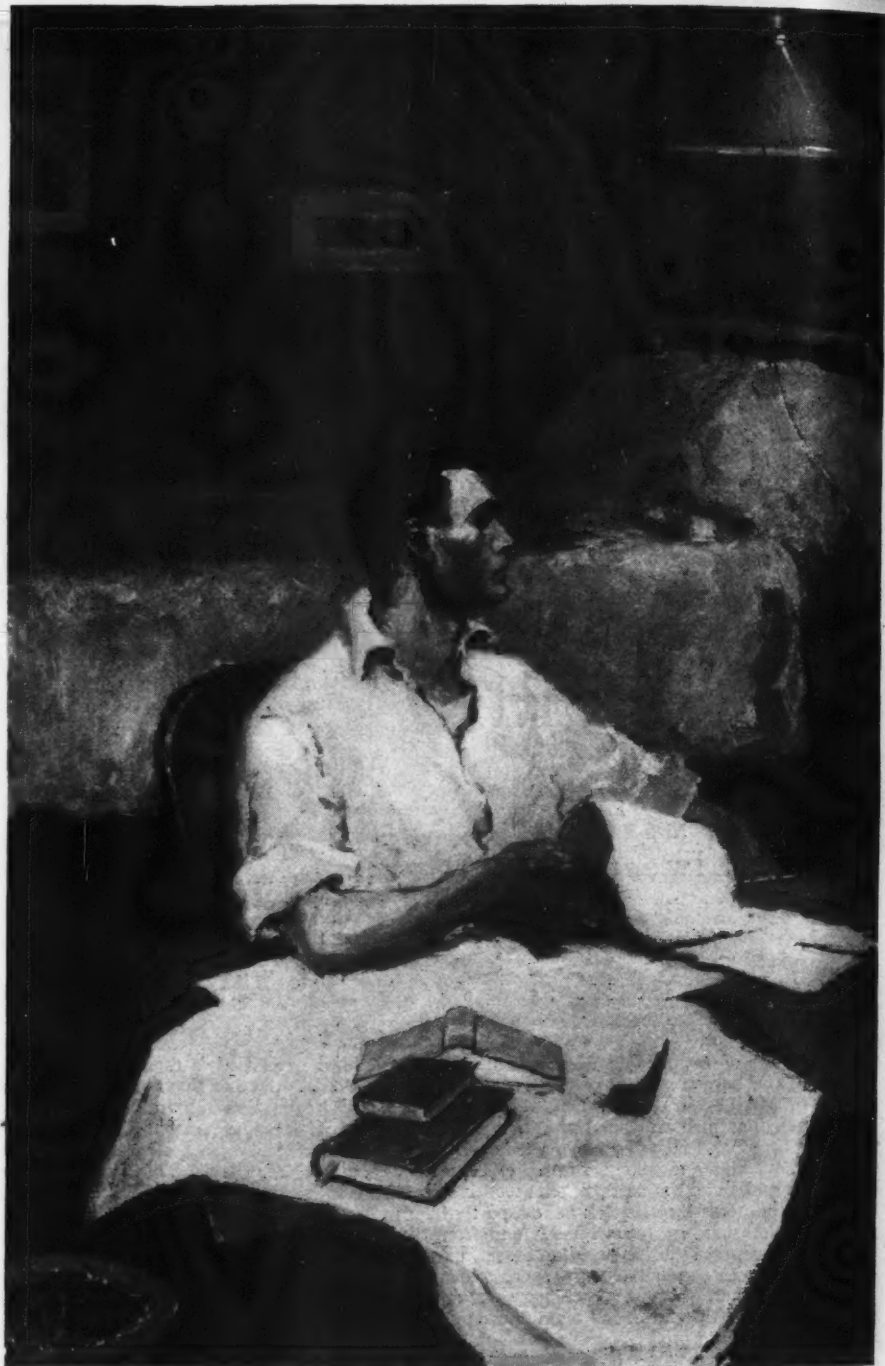
Already she admired him as though he were the dean of all living playwrights and the superior of all the dead ones.

"Oh, Roger," she said, "please hurry up and be rich, and famous, and everything!"

He smiled whimsically.

"It's going to take me just twice too long, Nancy, because I've got to waste so much of my time on this cursed law. But, for heaven's sake, darling, if you ever talk in your sleep, don't you dare to say a word about my writing on the side, because if you do, you'll spoil everything." Roger snorted reminiscently. "He just now told me, in his opinion, a writer's nothing but a blacksmith with perfume on him."

At this, she started up indignantly.



Roger went back to his boarding-house bedroom, and his debts, and his ambitions. of the resiliency had

"Well then, a lawyer isn't anything but a—one of those things—you know—a parasite! Why, if people didn't quarrel and steal and—cheat each other, and want divorces, why where'd your lawyers be then? They'd be in the poorhouse; that's where they'd be!"

"Exactly," said Roger. "Only, I didn't want to tell him so. Do you?"

She laughed a little, and shook her head.

"Who are you going in with?"

"That's another thing. I can't go to work for anybody else—can I?—when I've got a divided interest like this, and when I couldn't put all my mind on the job? That wouldn't be so very honorable, would it? So I'm going out for myself."

Nancy caught her breath.

"Does dad know it? What did he say?"

"Well," said Roger, "he as much as told me that if I weren't

who wouldn't be told anything, and he had then concerned himself about the style of lettering on Roger's door and the precise quality of Roger's stationery.

On the day that Roger opened his office, Mr. Hunter sent him his first client, and when he told his daughter about it, she was almost overwhelmed with joy and gratitude.

"Oh, it doesn't really amount to anything," said Mr. Hunter, in deprecation. "Some long-haired nut—I guess he's an inventor—just wanted to incorporate a little five-thousand-dollar company to put one of his patents on the market. He got into our place by mistake. I saw him a second when I was going out, and he asked if I wouldn't give him the name of somebody cheaper than we are, and just as honest." Mr. Hunter laughed at the recollection. "So I sent him over to Roger."

Nancy drew a great breath of excitement.

"How much'll he get for it?"

"Why, I telephoned him," said Mr. Hunter, "and told him to charge the man twenty-five dollars."

Her tone was evidence of acute disappointment.

"Is that all?"

He explained to her that twenty-five dollars was a fair and reasonable fee; her disappointment, however, returned in volume, and Mr. Hunter himself was dumfounded when they heard Roger hadn't got his fee in cash.

"Why, no," he said. "You see, this man's taken out some patents on a funny little automobile engine; and he's pretty nearly broken his neck to raise a couple of thousand dollars to start manufacturing, and he didn't want to let go any of it. I couldn't blame him, either; but, first off, before I'd heard his story, I put up a roar for fifty dollars—"

"Fifty?" echoed Mr. Hunter. "Fifty?" I thought I told you twenty-five would be fair and reasonable, didn't I?"

Roger winced, but he caught Nancy's eye and went on calmly. "So then I dropped to twenty-five, and then he told me all about himself, and the awful time he had to get his patents, and so on, and I kept getting sorrier and sorrier for him all the time. So, finally, I said I'd make it fifteen, but he wouldn't even pay that much. He offered me five shares of stock in the company, and I said I'd take it."

"That," said Mr. Hunter seriously, "is nothing more nor less than gambling for your fee." He made a weapon of his forefinger and brandished it at Roger. "That sort of thing will kill your prestige, young man, before you know it. I don't see why you chose to disregard my advice; other people pay me pretty handsomely for it."

Nancy got up and crossed the room and deliberately sat down on the arm of Roger's chair.

"Well," she remarked, "I'm glad he did it. We can get rich

and worked doggedly away to make his thoughts imperishable. But some been pounded out of him.

any more honest than I am intelligent, I'd be porch-climbing for a living right this minute."

"Oh! He—he didn't like the idea?"

"No," said Roger dryly. "I gathered a faint impression that he didn't. But I'll show him yet—that is, if you're sure you want me to go ahead and try."

She convinced him with open arms, and even as he held her close to him, he was aware that a clever dramatist and a good scene-painter could get a great deal out of an emotional situation in a moonlit garden. Indeed, he was amazed that no one had ever thought of it before.

By the time he had hired an office and got his name painted large on the door, he felt positively waterlogged with good advice from Mr. Hunter. Mr. Hunter had vigorously opposed this independence, but when he found that his opposition was useless, he had recorded, once and for all, his opinion of a young man

The Man Who Wouldn't Be Told

fast enough without that poor man's twenty-five dollars—can't we, Roger, dear?"

Roger told himself that Mr. Hunter had no imagination, but now he endeavored to supply Mr. Hunter with an understanding. Very likely the inventor was a nut, just as Mr. Hunter said he was; very likely the stock would never be worth more than the junk value of the certificate. But Roger had been sorry for the man, and, furthermore, he couldn't afford to overlook the very thinnest opportunity.

"Why, as a matter of fact," he said, "it didn't cost me anything but a little bit of time, did it? I helped out a man who's had mighty hard sledding—and I tell you, I'm so broke myself that I couldn't afford *not* to take a chance. Why isn't that all right?"

"It is all right, Roger, dear," said Nancy, but she was looking sidewise at her father when she said it.

Mr. Hunter, however, stuck to the main highway of his principles. He suggested that Roger cancel the whole transaction and turn the client over to a different sort of attorney—presumably one who had no Mr. Hunter to guide him—and when Roger respectfully declined, Mr. Hunter told him that if he ever could dispose of his stock for the bare equivalent of his fee, he ought to do it instantly.

"And that's a good, sound rule for making money," he said. "In all your undertakings, get a seat as near the exit as you can, and keep your eye on it. You haven't done it this time, but if you ever do see a profit, grab it in a hurry, Roger, and get out from under. And don't you ever take another fee in trade; take 'em in cash. You won't begin to make any success in law—not even a moderate one—till you get some of these basic ideas firmly fixed in your head. And that's one of 'em."

Now, the boy had always known that he could never hope for even a moderate success in the law, but he had hoped that his practise would support him, and screen his true ambitions until he could call attention to a play on Broadway and convert Mr. Hunter by the sledge-hammer fact of a bank-balance. By sitting up too late at night, he completed, in four months, a painfully psychological drama, and sent it off to an agent, but, in the mean time, he had picked up very few crumbs of business, and he was sliding rapidly into debt. His circumstances worried him; Mr. Hunter worried him, and above all, the state of his health worried him. He saw that he had put himself under too heavy a strain, but it was composed of only two elements, of which one was imperative to himself and the other was equally imperative to Mr. Hunter.

Nancy did her best to console him and hearten him, and as long as he was actually with her, he was happy, but the days he spent in his office were a grinding torment, and he was often demoralized by Mr. Hunter's attitude. Indeed, one night, as he squared away at his desk, he suddenly realized that he had changed the order of his motives; he still wanted to succeed because of himself and because of Nancy, but it was Mr. Hunter, and Mr. Hunter's manner of speaking, and Mr. Hunter's assumption of the robes of a prophet, which put the razor-edge on his ambition.

The agent speedily returned the play with a polite note to say that it was too far in advance of the age to get across to a metropolitan audience. Roger stared hard at the paragraph and saw far beyond it; he visualized a long probation in the hated office; he heard the echo of a thousand platitudes from Mr. Hunter; he totaled the sum of his debts. He wondered whether it was worth while to prolong his double life; he wondered whether he wouldn't improve his status if he came out boldly from ambush, and

threw down an ultimatum to Mr. Hunter, and began to direct his own life absolutely to his own purposes.

At this critical moment, catastrophe put its head round the corner, and in twenty minutes solved the problem for him.

"And now," said Mr. Hunter judicially, "it's time for me to say what's been on my mind for the last eight months. The trouble with you, Roger, is that you won't be told anything. Didn't I warn you to get rid of that crazy inventor if you could, and not get mixed up in that kind of second-hand business? Yes, I did; and you went right ahead with it just the same." He inhaled deeply, to provide a fresh start. "Didn't I give you my own system of checking up papers? Yes, I did, and if you'd followed it, you'd have been all right, even then. And what did you do? By George, I'd think you'd go blush at yourself in a mirror! You made such a mess of a simple incorporation—your very first client, and one I sent you—that he's had to get another lawyer to straighten out his charter for him. You've advertised yourself all over town as careless and unreliable, and everybody in Carthage knows it—"

Roger interrupted him.

"Well, I've told you I hate law, and I'm no good at it, and my mind isn't on it. I don't care whether I make anything out of it or not. I only stayed in it because you said—"

"Roger, there's no place in my office, and none in my family, for a man that can be so grossly negligent of the sacred duty a lawyer owes to his client! By George, young man, you don't even act *responsible*!"

Roger went straight to Nancy, and told her that he was done with Carthage and done with the law.

"I can't stand it," he said, "I simply can't stand it; I thought I could, but I can't. I was right on the point of saying so, anyway, but this mess just proves it. I'm through."

She reached out her hand to him, but he was blind.

"One mistake doesn't prove so very much, does it?"

"Oh, not by itself, but don't you see the thing won't work?"

She glanced up fearfully.

"What won't work, Roger? Any of it?"

"How do you mean?"

"Have you made up your mind I'm not worth it?"

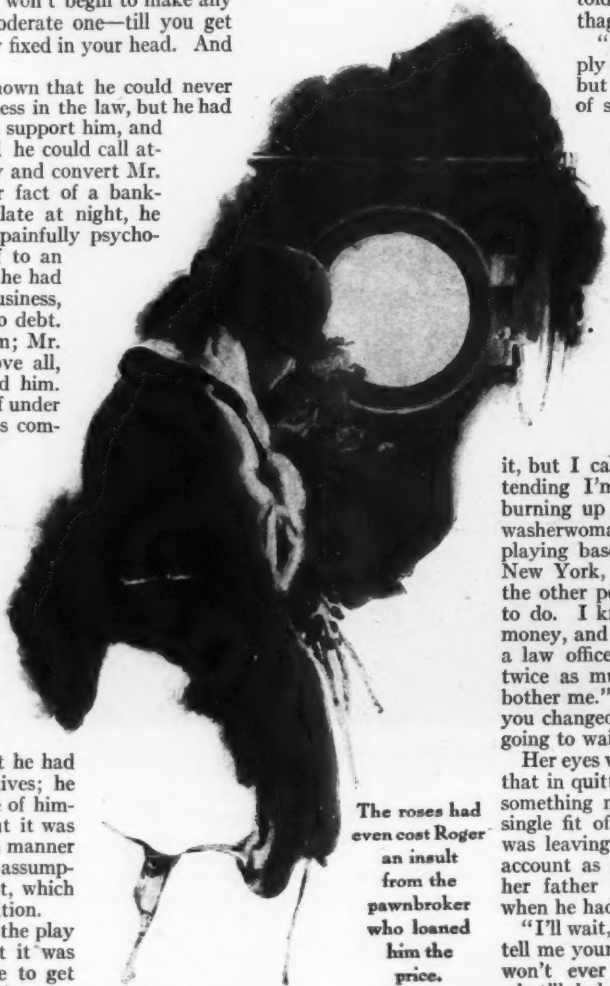
"Oh, Nancy!" he said, reproachfully. "That isn't it. I know I can write plays; I feel

it, but I can't do it in this atmosphere, pretending I'm a lawyer when I'm not, and burning up all the daylight in getting some washerwoman's son out of police court for playing baseball in the street. I'm going to New York, where the big theaters are, and the other people who're doing what I want to do. I know where I can borrow a little money, and get a two-for-a-cent job—not in a law office, either—that'll give me almost twice as much time to write and nothing to bother me." He bent towards her. "Have you changed your mind, dearest—or are you going to wait for me?"

Her eyes were wet and troubled. She knew that in quitting Carthage he was impelled by something more than his own chagrin at a single fit of carelessness; she knew that he was leaving almost as much on her father's account as on his own, and she knew what her father would probably say about him when he had gone.

"I'll wait," she said tremulously, "until you tell me yourself it isn't any use—and then I won't ever marry anybody else. Only—what'll dad say?"

To her father, Roger's desertion of the law was half-way between a misdemeanor and a felony, but when he saw that his influence was nothing, he stopped arguing about the present and began a new course of instruction for the future. He supported a hearty contempt for the stage, but when he once concentrated on it, he was very prolific with valuable ideas, and he spoke with



The roses had even cost Roger an insult from the pawnbroker who loaned him the price.



"You'll—you'll laugh at me," stammered Roger. "but—look under my pillow. I've been saving them for you. Press clippings."

as much authority as though he had studied the technique of the drama under William Shakespeare himself.

To the consternation of her parents, Nancy broke down completely at the parting, and her last words to Roger, as she held tight to him and kissed him openly and unashamed, had to do with centuries and eternities. Later, Mr. Hunter attempted to show her the wisdom of repression, and to demonstrate that no girl of eighteen can be said, generally, to know her own mind, but for the first time in her life she was ready with a counter attack, and when it was over, she had succeeded in making him feel that he had literally driven Roger Bennett out of town. The sensation of guilt was novel to him, and it was puzzling, for he was absolutely certain that he didn't deserve it, and that it

wasn't logical, but for many weeks he was uneasy whenever he found that her eyes had wandered toward him, and it was nearly six months before he ventured to remark that Roger was a young man who couldn't be told anything, and that, in consequence, he was destined to inevitable failure.

She wrote to Roger every day; sometimes, for greater intimacy, she would go up into her own room in the evening, and put on her prettiest negligée, and cover half a dozen pages with affectionate optimism. Mr. Hunter told her that unless she intended to discount a large part of her precious youth, she ought to put this matter out of her thoughts as much as possible, but, for the second time, her answer floored him.

"Oh, yes," she said, with gentle cynicism; "I know the things

you love you treat that way. You're always talking about putting 'em away and forgetting 'em. Only, you see, Roger doesn't happen to be a four-per-cent. bond, so with me it's different." Again Mr. Hunter couldn't feel that his sense of guilt was quite logical.

Regularly each morning she had from Roger a long apostrophe to herself, and although she loved these vivid descriptions of what she meant to him, and although each of them made her as happy as a rose vine in the sunlight, yet she eventually asked him to say a little more about his progress and to furnish a daily account of what was happening to him. Sometime afterward, however, she wished that she hadn't demanded to know the score by innings, for his second play had been declined by everybody and his third, a comedy entitled, "The Worst is Yet to Come," had been sent back to him with the penciled comment, "We don't believe it."

He was young, and poor, and trebly ambitious, but at the end of a year he was drenched with debt and disappointment; it was plain that some of the resiliency had been pounded out of him. Mr. Hunter spoke of it with sorrow, but also with strict justice, and said that it was only what any keen observer might have prophesied. Nancy was automatically defensive, but her letters to Roger began to bristle with sharp little goads, half challenge, half encouragement. Some of these alarmed him, and she couldn't understand why he wasn't pacified by her response that in a year she had said "No" to seven other suitors, and was prepared to say "No" to seven hundred.

He came back to Carthage for the second Christmas, but when he discovered what was on the calendar he became infinitely too depressed to enjoy his holiday. Mr. Hunter had worked for thirty years without a genuine vacation; he longed to make a lazy pilgrimage round the world, and now he was planning that in the spring he would retire from his practise, and take his family abroad. He wanted to spend the summer in England, then to go to Paris until the snow fell; march on to Switzerland, and in another spring, to Italy; then a summer on the Riviera, across to Morocco, and thence to Egypt—

"Good Lord!" said Roger, swallowing hard. "How long would you be gone—altogether?"

"Oh, two and a half to three years," said Mr. Hunter cheerfully, and Roger wilted.

Nancy did her best to reassure him, but his mood was leagues beyond her.

"By the time you get back," he said thickly, "you'll have forgotten all about me!"

Her smile was fragile.

"No; by the time we get back you'll be a very great man and I'll be proud to know you."

In May he saw her in New York, but the meeting was constrained and unsatisfactory. He told her then that he had no right to expect her to wait indefinitely. "Here I am," he said, downcast, "still broke and still struggling. God knows I'll never change, but if you happen to run across some other man you like better—somebody who wouldn't have to put you off like this—"

"Please, Roger, please! You don't want to make me cry, do you?"

Mr. Hunter, however, spilled acid into his raw discouragement.

"Now let's sit down like two sensible men, Roger, and look the facts in the face. To be perfectly frank with you, I don't

ever expect to let my daughter marry a failure. It was against my judgment that you left Carthage, and strictly between ourselves, I look on this work you're doing as simply gambling with ideas. But you wouldn't be told anything, Roger; you wouldn't learn anything from older men; you had to try your luck. And I tell you now, just as I told you before, it don't pay. It don't pay to count on luck at all. I never did, and I never had any either; what I made, I made myself, and—"

"Don't you think," inquired Roger, subdued, "that it was pretty average lucky for Carthage to keep on growing when you'd tied up all your money in real estate?"

"Lucky?" Mr. Hunter sniffed his impatience. "Don't you know the difference between luck and good management? I knew Carthage would grow."

"All right," said Roger respectfully. "I know I will."

Mr. Hunter wagged his head with solemn meaning.

"Well, we all like you, Roger, in spite of your—little eccentricities—and I'm paying you a mighty big compliment when I let this affair of yours and Nancy's run on at all. When we get home again if Nancy's still free, and if you've made any success, we'll consider it from that angle. Mind you, I won't stand for any engagement between you now; long engagements aren't sensible and you haven't any business to mortgage Nancy's future. But my last advice to you, Roger, is to quit gambling and get a job in a law office and do a man's work. You'll never get anywhere writing and there's no money in it, anyway. I'm only sorry you didn't take my advice when you were in Carthage."

The Hunters sailed away, and in Nancy's stateroom there was an armful of American Beauties which literally stunned her, for she knew what bitter sacrifice they must have cost. Her imagination, however, didn't remotely begin to bridge the facts. They had even cost him an insult from the pawnbroker who loaned him the price.

The Hunters sailed away, and Roger went back to his hall bedroom and his debts and his ambitions, and worked doggedly away to make his thoughts imperishable.

From England Nancy wrote to him once a week, and from France she wrote to him once a fortnight. Her letters always mentioned her undying faith in him, but somehow her phrases seemed a bit perfunctory. He told himself that perhaps she was ceasing to believe in him, or perhaps already she had found some other man who could replace him; but as long as he loved her (which was to say as long as he lived) he would never cease to believe in himself. More than that—more even than his anxiety to lay his laurels in her lap—he was anxious to succeed because her father had told him that he couldn't.

He knew that Mr. Hunter measured success in terms of both money and reputation; for himself, he cared nothing whatsoever about money, except to provide for his most essential needs and, of course, to provide for the coming lifetime with Nancy. What he wanted, individually, was distinction—his name on programs and billboards, notices in the papers, town-talk. He wanted to be a national figure in the theater, while Mr. Hunter was only a local dignitary. But because Mr. Hunter measured success in terms of money, Roger wanted also to have more money than Mr. Hunter—much more money than Mr. Hunter—so much that the older man would never dare uncork that flow of gratuitous advice. Still, from present indications, it was a very anemic possibility. (Continued on page 139)



The popular author of this story, HOLWORTHY HALL, about to set forth upon another flight of fancy in his present-day Pegasus. Another story from his facile pen will appear in COSMOPOLITAN soon.

tion—his name on programs and billboards, notices in the papers, town-talk. He wanted to be a national figure in the theater, while Mr. Hunter was only a local dignitary. But because Mr. Hunter measured success in terms of money, Roger wanted also to have more money than Mr. Hunter—much more money than Mr. Hunter—so much that the older man would never dare uncork that flow of gratuitous advice. Still, from present indications, it was a very anemic possibility. (Continued on page 139)



"Who said drinks?" A rest on the journey into the big game country.

Hoodooed!

"Of all illusive game animals that I ever wanted to get," states the author, George Agnew Chamberlain—hunter, humorist and diplomat "the bull inyala heads the list." Here he tells how he finally got one.

Illustrated with photographs taken by Charles Anderson Cass and The Author



The author, after the inyala kill, attired in mosquito boots and woolens.



Mr. Cass, rejoicing after the wash-up at the end of the day's hunting.

NONE of the fifty-odd varieties of major antelope in Africa has been so variously appraised as the inyala, a member of the truly noble family that counts as the least of its line

during the last ten years to visit all three of its haunts situated in Portuguese territory, and it is safe to assert that no single one of them exceeds fifty miles in circumference and that each is definitely cut off from the others by obstacles which the inyala, as we know it to-day, could never surmount. Like its royal cousin, the bongo (of which Kermit Roosevelt was the first white man to secure a specimen), it is terrified of open spaces and seldom goes more than a few yards from the dense, thorny bush which is its habitat.

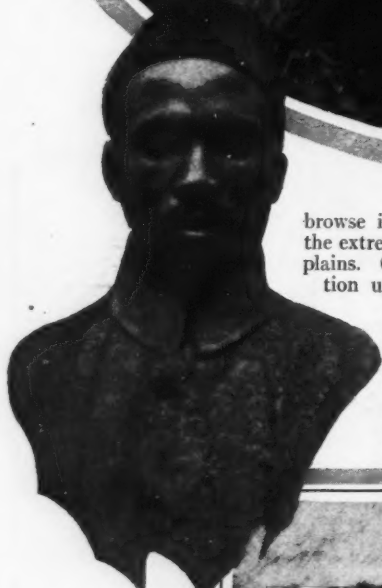
But the restricted splotches of jungle which it frequents are so well-nigh impassable that the inyala seems to have acquired an exaggerated sense of immunity from danger; not only does it feel safe while inside the vast thickets, but when they are near by. Consequently in the early morning and at evening it walks recklessly out, generally accompanied by a wife and only child, to

the little bushbuck (credited with having killed more hunters than any other horned animal excepting the Cape buffalo) and which also includes the splendid bongo. One or two authorities put down the inyala as the easiest of all game to find and kill; others declare it to be among the most difficult.

The reasons for these conflicting estimates are not far to seek. Of all antelope the inyala is supposed to be the most localized in its range and is known to exist in only four strictly circumscribed regions; three in that minor portion of the Province of Mozambique which lies south of parallel twenty-two and the fourth in Central Africa, north of the Zambesi. It has been my fortune



Downed at last!
The most prized of
all of Mr. Chamberlain's
game trophies—the inyala bull.
(Now in possession of the Museum of
Natural History, New York)



Edy, the author's
official gun-
bearer.

browse in open glades and at the extreme edges of uncovered plains. Owing to strict protection up to 1915 and to its natural inaccessibility the tribe has undoubtedly been on the increase until now. Taking into consideration the physical limitations of its breeding

scratch outfit into the Tembe country. We landed at an old haunt of mine, but found that the years had dealt harshly with Shibeke, the local chief. He could no longer stand the strain of a day's march. After greeting Edy, my gun-bearer, with something approaching affection, he sent out messengers to fetch two youths whom he recommended as experienced trackers, and the following morning we moved camp to a rainfall waterhole ten miles inland, in the very midst of the bush and far from any kraal. Conditions had changed with a vengeance since my last visit. Having been shot at during several seasons the inyala no longer walked boldly down one side and up the other of a sparsely wooded valley.

They seemed to have retired definitely into the almost impenetrable thickets which abounded in the district and it was only by taking up their early morning spoors and following them patiently hour after hour that we succeeded in getting near enough even to catch a fleeting glimpse of a crashing form as the game broke from only a few yards away.

To add to the general feeling of defeat and discomfort the dawn of the last day at our disposal broke to a drizzle which gradually thickened into a steady rain, such an occurrence as under pre-war conditions had not



Even the news of the inyala kill half a mile away could not disturb the complacency of the camp, already gorged with meat.

grounds, it is astonishingly numerous, probably as plentiful as when it was first discovered. The result is that anyone who knows just where to go and has time and the patience to wait for opportunity is practically sure of a shot.

September of 1920 found Cass and myself at Delagôa Bay with a week to spare on our way up the coast, and we decided to take a



Off for the lair
of the inyala.
with old Maoia
in the lead.



A snowy
ibis, display-
ing himself under
the rigid protection
of the game laws.

been known in September during the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

There may be countries where shooting in the rain is a pleasure, but Africa is not one of them. In the first place, the wet does not invigorate; it merely depresses the spirit and all but paralyzes the body. The Kafirs and their women, huddled in huts amid shivering dogs and squatting chickens, go into a sort of hibernation, scarcely moving and seldom speaking; the little goatherds creep under the scanty shelter of a milala palm frond and frankly weep by the hour; all natural denizens of the wilderness seem to sink into the sodden ground and utterly disappear; spoors are blotted out or at the best rendered unreadable except when they are cut fresh and deep by game forced against its will to make a rush before the purely fortuitous approach of the hunter. In the face of these drawbacks there were reasons for thinking; that the conditions would aid the inyala less than any of the more scattered buck, as there was less speculation as to just where to go to stir them up, and once they were flushed, the cover was certain to be so dense that the spoor would hold for a long time, however heavy the rain.

My party consisted only of guide, tracker and myself, Edy having been left behind to attend to the striking of camp. Without bothering with the scattered clumps of cover here and there we made straight for the great inyala bush, plunged into it and advanced as swiftly as the growth would allow. After less than an hour's walking we heard what we were



An important ceremony after the hunt—
the salting of the inyala hide.

listening for—the sound of a startled rush and crash which died suddenly as though smothered by the wet blanket of the dripping forest. We moved in the direction from which it had come and picked up the deeply indented spoor of a buck accompanied by the very usual combination of wife and child. A halt was called to give emphasis to the command that from there on we were to

proceed with every possible caution. After taking the wind and finding it virtually stationary, we began to crawl (Continued on page 142)

A Novel That Millions of Patriotic Americans Are Talking About

WHEN the young Spanish-Irish "Don Mike" Farrell, unexpectedly shows up at his beloved California principality, Rancho Palomar, after being reported killed in the War, he promptly sets to work to recover his property from the powers of high finance, which have already started to develop the territory as part of a Japanese colonization scheme. Until the legal and financial complications are settled, "Don Mike" invites his chief antagonist, John Parker, of Wall Street—the father of the girl Kay—to share his home. While riding over the ranch, a Japanese shoots and wounds Don Mike, but the outlaw is promptly killed by Pablo, Don Mike's picturesque majordomo. Upon Don Mike's recovery Parker prepares to resume the legal battle for possession of Palomar—despite the fact that Kay had secretly loaned \$50,000 to Bill Conway to carry on Don Mike's dam project.

The Pride of Palomar

By
Peter B. Kyne

The story which caused Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., to issue his already famous symposium, "The Verdict of Public Opinion on the Japanese-American Question."

Illustrations by H. R. Ballinger

KAY PARKER was seated on the bench under the catalpa tree when Miguel Farrel rode up the palm-lined avenue to the hacienda that night; his face, as he dismounted before her, conveyed instantly to the girl the impression that he was in a more cheerful and contented mood than she had observed since that day she had first met him in uniform.

She smiled a welcome. He swept off his hat and favored her with a bow which appeared to Kay to be slightly more ceremonious than usual.

"Your horse is tired," she remarked. "Are you?"

"Something accomplished, something done, has earned a night's repose," he quoted cheerfully. "Rather a hard task to comb this ranch for a few hundred head of cattle when the number of one's riders is limited, but we have gotten the herd corralled at the old race-track." He unbuckled his old leathern chaps, and stepped out of them, threw them across the saddle and with a slap sent his horse away to the barn.

"You're feeling quite yourself again?" she hazarded hopefully.

"My foolish head doesn't bother me," he replied smilingly, "but my equally foolish heart—" he heaved a gusty Castilian sigh and tried to appear forlorn. "Filled with mixed metaphors," he added. "May I sit here with you?"

She made room for him beside her on the bench. He seated himself, leaned back against the bole of the catalpa tree and stretched his legs, cramped from a long day in the saddle. The



Don Mike seemed about to deliver some important announcement—

indolent gaze of his black eyes roved over her approvingly before shifting to the shadowy beauty of the valley and the orange-hued sky beyond, and a silence fell between them.

"I was thinking to-day," the girl said presently, "that you've been so busy since your return you haven't had time to call on any of your old friends."

"That is true, Miss Parker."

"You have called me Kay," she reminded him. "Wherefore this sudden formality, Don Mike?"

"My name is Miguel. You're right, Kay. Fortunately, all of my friends called on me when I was in the hospital, and at that time I took pains to remind them that my social activities would be limited for at least a year."

"Two of your friends called on mother and me to-day, Miguel."

"Anita Gonzales and her mother?"

"Yes. She's adorable."

"They visited me in hospital. Very old friends—very dear friends. I asked them to call on you and your mother. I wanted you to know Anita."

"She's the most beautiful and charming girl I have ever met."

"She is beautiful and charming. Her family, like mine, had become more or less decayed about the time I enlisted, but fortunately her mother had a quarter-section of land down in Ventura County and when a wild-cat oil operator on adjacent land brought in a splendid well, Señora Gonzales was enabled to



but to Kay's huge disappointment he smothered the impulse and jerked his hand away. "Oh, I'm a sky-blue idiot," he half growled.

dispose of her land at a thousand dollars an acre and a royalty of one-eighth on all of the oil produced. The first well drilled was a success and in a few years the Gonzales family will be far wealthier than it ever was. Meanwhile their ranch here has been saved from loss by foreclosure. Old Don Enrique, Anita's father, is dead."

"Anita is the only child, is she not?"

He nodded. "Ma Gonzales is a lady of the old school," he continued. "Very dignified, very proud of her distinguished descent—"

"And very fond of you," Kay interrupted.

"Always was, Kay. She's an old peach. Came to the hospital and cried over me and wanted to loan me enough money to lift the mortgage on my ranch."

"Then—then—your problem is—solved," Kay found difficulty in voicing the sentence.

He nodded. She turned her face away that he might not see the pallor that overspread it. "It is a very great comfort to me," he resumed presently, "to realize that the world is not altogether barren of love and kindness."

"It must be," she murmured, her face still averted.

"It was the dearest wish of my poor father and of Anita's that the ancient friendship between the families should be cemented by a marriage between Anita and me. For me Señora Gonzales would be a marvelous mother-in-law, because she's my kind of

people and we understand each other. Really, I feel tremendously complimented because, even before the oil strike saved the family from financial ruin, Anita did not lack opportunities for many a more brilliant match."

"She's—dazzling," Kay murmured drearily. "What a brilliant wife she will be for you."

"Anita is far too fine a woman for such a sacrifice. I've always entertained a very great affection for her and she for me. There's only one small bug in our amber."

"And that—"

"We aren't the least bit in love with each other. We're children of a later day and we object to the old-fashioned method of a marriage arranged by papa and mama. I know there must be something radically wrong with me; otherwise I never could resist Anita."

"But you are going to marry her, are you not?"

"I am not. She wouldn't marry me on a bet. And of course I didn't accept her dear old mother's offer of financial aid. Couldn't, under the circumstances, and besides, it would not be kind of me to transfer my burden to them. I much prefer to paddle my own canoe."

He noticed a rush of color to the face as she turned abruptly toward him now. "What a heritage of pride you have, Miguel! But are you quite certain Anita Gonzales does not love you? You should have heard all the nice things she said about you to-day."

"She ought to say nice things about me," he replied casually. "When she was quite a little girl she was given to understand that her ultimate mission in life was to marry me. Of course I always realized that it would not be a compliment to Anita to indicate that I was not head over heels in love with her; I merely pretended I was too bashful to mention it. Finally one day Anita suggested, as a favor to her and for the sake of my own self-respect, that I abandon the pose; with tears in her eyes she begged me to be a gallant rebel and save her from the loving solicitude of her parents to see her settled in life. At that moment I almost loved her, particularly when, having assured her of my entire willingness and ability to spoil everything, she kissed me rapturously on both cheeks and confided to me that she was secretly engaged to an engineer chap who was gophering for potash in Death Valley. The war interrupted his gophering, but Anita informs me that he found the potash, and now he can be a sport and bet his potash against Señora Gonzales' crude oil. Fortunately, my alleged death gave Anita an opportunity to advance his claims, and he was in a fair way of becoming acceptable until my unexpected return rather greased the skids for him. Anita's mother is trying to give the poor devil the double-cross now, but I told Anita she needn't worry."

Kay's eyes danced with merriment—and relief. "But," she persisted, "you told me your problem was settled? And it isn't."

"It is. I'm going to sell about eighteen thousand dollars worth of cattle off this ranch, and I've leased the valley grazing privilege for one year for ten thousand dollars. My raid on Loustalot netted me sixty-seven thousand dollars, so that my total bankroll is now about ninety-five thousand dollars. At first I thought I'd let Bill Conway have most of my fortune to help him complete that dam, but I have now decided to stop work on the dam and use all of my energy and my fortune to put through such other deals as may occur to me. If I am lucky I shall emerge with sufficient funds to save the ranch. If I am unlucky, I shall lose the ranch. Therefore, the issue is decided. 'God's in his Heaven; all's well with the world.' What have you been doing all day?"

"Painting and sketching. I'll never be a worth-while artist, but I like to paint things for myself. I've been trying to depict on canvas the San Gregorio in her new spring gown, as you phrase it. The arrival of the Gonzales family interrupted me, and I've been sitting here since they departed. We had tea."

"Getting a trifle bored with the country, Kay? I fancy you find it lonely out here."

"It was a trifle quiet while you were in hospital. Now that you're back I suppose we can ride occasionally and visit some of the places of local interest."

"By all means. As soon as I get rid of that little bunch of cattle I'm going to give a barbecue and festival to the countryside in honor of my guests. We'll eat a half dozen fat two-year-old steers and about a thousand loaves of bread and a couple of barrels of claret and a huge mess of chili sauce. When I announce in the *El Toro Sentinel* that I'm going to give a *fiesta* and that everybody is welcome, all my friends and their friends and relatives will come and I'll be spared the trouble of visiting them individually. Don Nicholas Sandoval remarked when he collected that Loustalot judgment for me that he supposed I'd do the decent thing, now that I could afford it. Mother Gonzales suggested it and Anita seconded the motion. It will probably be the last event of its kind on such a scale ever given in California, and when it is finished it will have marked my transition from an indolent *ranchero* to some sort of commercial go-getter."

"I see. Little Mike, the Hustler."

He nodded, rose and stood before her, smiling down at her with an inscrutable little smile. "Will you motor me in to El Toro to-morrow morning?" he pleaded. "I must go there to arrange for cattle cars."

"Of course."

"Thank you, Kay. Now, if I have your permission to withdraw, I think I shall make myself presentable for dinner."

He hesitated a moment before withdrawing, however, meanwhile gazing down on her with a gaze so intent that the girl flushed a little. Suddenly his hand darted out and he had her adorable little chin clasped between his brown thumb and forefinger, shaking it with little shakes of mock ferocity. He seemed about to deliver some important announcement—impassioned, even, but to her huge disgust he smothered the impulse, jerked his hand away as if he had scorched his fingers, and blushed guiltily. "Oh, I'm a sky-blue idiot," he half growled and left her abruptly.

A snort—to a hunter it would have been vaguely reminiscent

of that of an old buck deer suddenly disturbed in a thicket—caused her to look up. At the corner of the wall Pablo Artelan stood, staring at her with alert interest; his posture was one of a man suddenly galvanized into immobility. Kay blushed, but instantly decided to appear nonchalant.

"Good evening, Pablo," she greeted the majordomo. "How do you feel after your long, hard day on the range?"

"Gracias, mees. Myself, I feel pretty good. When my boss hees happy—well—Pablo Artelan hees happy just the same."

The girl noted his emphasis. "That's very nice of you, Pablo, I'm sure. Have you any idea," she continued with bland innocence, "why Don Miguel is so happy this evening?"

Pablo leaned against the adobe wall, thoughtfully drew forth tobacco-bag and brown cigarette-paper and, while shaking his head and appearing to ponder Kay's question, rolled a cigarette and lighted it. "We-l-l, *señorita*," he began presently, "I theenk first mebbeso eet is because Don Miguel find heem one leetle piece paper on the trail. I am see him peek those paper up and look at heem for long time before he ride to me and ask me many question about the *señorita* and Señor Beel Conway those day we ride to Agua Caliente. He say to me: 'Pablo, you see Señor Beel Conway give to the *señorita* a writing?' 'Si, *señor*.' 'You see Señorita Parker give to Señor Beel Conway a writing?' 'Si, *señor*.' Then Don Miguel hees don't say some-theeng more, but just shake his *cabeza* like thees," and Pablo gave an imitation of a much puzzled man wagging his head to stimulate a flow of ideas.

A faintness seized the girl. "Didn't he say—anything?" she demanded sharply.

"Oh, well, yes, he say some-theeng. He say: 'Well, I'bedam! Then that leetle smile he don't have for long time come back to Don Miguel's face and hees happy like one baby. I don't un'erstand those boy until I see thees business—" Pablo wiggled his tobacco-stained thumb and forefinger—"then I know some-theeng! For long time those boy hees pretty parteeular. Even those so beautiful *señorita*, 'Nita Gonzales, she don't rope those boy like you rope it, *señorita*.' And with the license of an old and trusted servant, the sage of Palomar favored her with a knowing wink.

"He knows—he knows!" the girl thought. "What must he think of me! Oh, dear, oh, dear! if he mentions the subject to me I shall die." Tears of mortification were in her eyes as she turned angrily upon the amazed Pablo. "You—you—old sky-blue idiot!" she charged and fled to her room.

Kay's first coherent thought was to claim the privilege of her sex—a headache—and refrain from joining Don Mike and her parents at dinner. Upon consideration, however, she decided that since she would have to face the issue sooner or later, she might as well be brave and not try to evade it. For she knew now the fate of the promissory note Bill Conway had given her and which she had thrust into the pocket of her riding-coat. It had worked out of her pocket and dropped beside the trail to Agua Caliente basin, and fate had ordained that it should be found by the one person in the world not entitled to that privilege. Kay would have given fifty thousand dollars for some miraculous philter which, administered surreptitiously to Miguel Farrel, would cause him to forget what the girl now realized he knew of her secret negotiations with Bill Conway for the salvation of the ranch. Nevertheless, despite her overwhelming embarrassment and distress, the question occurred to her again and again: What would Don Miguel Farrel do about it? She hadn't the slightest doubt but that his tremendous pride would lead him to reject her aid and comfort, but how was he to accomplish this delicate procedure? The situation was fraught with as much awkwardness and embarrassment for him as for her.

She was late in joining the others at table. To her great relief, after rising politely at her entrance and favoring her with an impersonal smile, Farrel sat down and continued to discuss with John Parker and his wife the great natural resources of Siberia and the designs of the Japanese empire upon that territory. About the time the black coffee made its appearance, Kay's harassed soul had found sanctuary in the discussion of a topic which she knew would be of interest—one in which she felt she could join exuberantly.

"Do tell father and mother of your plans for a *fiesta*, Miguel," she pleaded presently.

"A *fiesta*, eh?" Mrs. Parker was instantly interested. "Miguel, that is, indeed, a bright thought. I volunteer as a patroness here and now. John, you can be a judge of the course, or something. Miguel, what is the occasion of your *fiesta*?"

"At a period in the world's history, Mrs. Parker, when butter is a dollar a pound and blue-denim overalls sell free for three



In Don Mike's desolation there came to him a wave of strong religious faith that was his sole unencumbered heritage. Once again he was a trustful little boy.

dollars a pair, I think we ought to do something to dissipate the general gloom. I want to celebrate my return to civil life, and my more recent return from the grave. Also, I would just as lief indicate to the county at large that, outside of business hours, we constitute a very happy little family here, so if you all please, I shall announce a *fiesta* in honor of the Parker family."

"It will last all day and night and we are to have a Wild West show," Kay added eagerly.

"Where will it be held, Miguel?"

"Down at our old abandoned race-track, about a mile from here."

Mrs. Parker nodded approval. "John, you old dud," she decided, "you always liked horse-races and athletics. You're stuck for some prizes."

Her indulgent husband good-naturedly agreed, and at Kay's suggestion, Carolina brought a pencil and a large writing-tablet, whereupon the girl constituted herself secretary of the carnival committee and wrote the program, as arranged by Don Mike

and her father. She thrilled when Farrel announced a race of six furlongs for ladies' saddle-horses, to be ridden by their owners.

"You ought to win that with Panchito," he suggested to Kay.

Kay's heart beat happily. In Farrel's suggestion that she ride Panchito in this race she decided that here was evidence that her host did not contemplate any action that would tend to render the ranch untenable for her prior to the *fiesta*; indeed, there was nothing in his speech or bearing that indicated the slightest mental perturbation now that he had discovered the compact existing between her and Bill Conway. Perhaps his pride was not so high as she had rated it; what if her action had been secretly pleasing to him?

Somehow, Kay found this latter thought disturbing and distasteful. It was long past midnight before she could dismiss the enigma from her thoughts and fall asleep.

It was later than that, however, before Don Miguel Jose Federico Noriaga Farrel dismissed her from his thoughts and succumbed to the arms of Morpheus. For quite a while after retiring to his room he sat on the edge of the bed, rubbing his toes with one hand and holding Bill Conway's promissory note before him with the other.

"That girl and her mother are my secret allies," he soliloquized. "Bless their dear, kind hearts. Kay has confided in Conway and for reasons best known to himself he has secretly accepted of her aid. Now I wonder," he continued, "what the devil actuates her to double-cross her own father in favor of a stranger?"

He tucked the note back in his pocket, removed a sock and rubbed the other foot thoughtfully. "Well, whatever happens," he decided eventually, "I've got to keep my secret to myself, while at the same time effectually preventing this young lady from advancing Bill Conway any further funds for my relief. I cannot afford her pity or her charity; I can accept her sympathy, but not her aid. Conway cannot have so soon spent much of the money he borrowed from her, and if I insist on the cessation of operations in the Basin he'll promptly give her back her fifty thousand dollars in order to save the interest charges; in the meantime I shall mail Kay the note in a plain white envelop, with the address typewritten, so she will never know where it came from, for of course she'll have to hand Bill back his canceled note when he pays it."

He blew out the light and retired, not to sleep, but to revolve plan after plan for the salvation of the ranch. To float a new loan from any source in San Marcos County he dismissed for the hundredth time as a proposition too nebulous for consideration. His only hope of a bank loan lay in an attempt to interest outside bankers to a point where they would consent to have the property appraised. Perhaps the letter from Parker which he held would constitute evidence to cautious capitalists of the sufficiency of the security for the loan. It was for that purpose that he had cunningly inveigled Parker into making him that offer to clear out and leave him a fair field and no litigation. However, Don Mike knew that between bankers there exists a certain mutual dependence, a certain cohesiveness that makes for mutual protection. If, for instance (he told himself), he should apply to a San Francisco bank for a loan on the ranch, the bank, prior to wasting either time or mental energy on his application, would first ascertain from sources other than him, whether it was remotely worth while considering the loan up to a point of sending a representative down to appraise the land. Their first move, therefore, would be to write their correspondent in El Toro—John Parker's bank, the First National—for information regarding the Farrel family, the ranch and the history of the mortgage. Don Mike was not such an optimist as to believe that the report of Parker's bank would be such as to encourage the outside bank to proceed further in the deal.

He was also aware that the loan would not be attractive to commercial banks, who are forced, in self-protection, to loan their money on liquid assets. He must therefore turn to the savings-banks and trust companies. But here again he faced an *impasse*. Such institutions loan money for the purpose of securing interest on it; the last thing they wish to do is to be forced, in the protection of the loan, to foreclose a mortgage.

In his desolation there came to him presently a wave of the strong religious faith that was his sole unencumbered heritage. Once again he was a trustful little boy. He slid out of the great bed of his ancestors and knelt on the old rag mat beside it; he poured out an appeal for help from One whom he had been told—whom he truly believed—marked the sparrow's fall. Don Mike was far from being the orthodox person one ordinarily visualizes in a Spanish-Irish Catholic, but he was deeply religious, his religious impulse taking quite

naturally a much more practical form and one most pleasing to himself and his neighbors, in that it impelled him to be brave and kind and hopeful, a gentleman in all that the word implies. He valued far more than he did the promise of a mansion in the skies a certain tranquillity of spirit which comes of conscious virtue.

At daylight he awakened suddenly and found himself quite mysteriously the possessor of a trend of reasoning that automatically forced him to sit up in bed.

Fifteen minutes later, mounted on Panchito, he was cantering up the San Gregorio, and just as the cook at Bill Conway's camp at Agua Caliente basin came to the door of the mess-hall and yelled: "Come an' git it or I'll throw it out," Panchito slid down the gravel cut-bank into camp.

"Where is Mr. Conway?" he demanded of the cook.

The latter jerked a greasy thumb toward the interior of the mess-hall, so, leaving Panchito "tied to the breeze," Don Mike disappeared and entered.

"Hello there, young feller," Bill Conway roared at him.

"Top o' the morning to you, old dirt-digger," Farrel replied. "Please deal me a hand of your ham and eggs, sunny side up. How be ye, Willum?"

"R'arin to go," Conway assured him.

"All right. Pack up and go to-day. You're through on this job."

"Why?"

"I've changed my mind about fighting Parker on this dam deal—and no profanity intended."

"But—but—"

"But me no buts, even if you are the goat. You're through. I forbid the bans. The eggs, man! I'm famished. The midnight ride of Paul Revere was a mere exercise gallop, because he started shortly after supper, but the morning ride of Mike Farrel has been done on fresh air."

"You're a lunatic. If you knew what I know, Miguel—"

"Hush! I want to ascertain what you know. Bet you a dollar!" He slammed a dollar down on the table and held his palm over it.

Bill Conway produced a dollar and likewise covered it. "Very well, son," he replied. "I'll see your dollar. What's the nature of the bet?"

"I'm betting a dollar you didn't draw the plans for this dam."

Bill Conway flipped his dollar over to his guest.

"I'm betting two dollars!"

Conway took two silver dollars from his vest pocket and laid them on the table. "And the bet?" he queried.

"I'm betting two dollars the plans were drawn by an engineer in Los Angeles."

"Some days I can't lay up a cent," the old contractor complained, and parted with his two dollars.

"I'm betting four dollars!" Farrel challenged.

"See your four dollars," Conway retorted and covered the bet.

"I'm betting that those plans were drawn by the engineer of the South Coast Power Corporation."

"Death loves a shining mark, Michael, my boy. Hand over that four dollars."

Farrel produced a five dollar bill. "I'm betting five dollars," he challenged again.

"Not with me, son. You're too good. I suppose your next bet will be that the plans were drawn by the engineer of the Central California Power Company."

"Were they?"

"Yes."

"Got a set of the plans with his name on them?"

"You bet."

"I want them."

"They're yours, provided you tell your Uncle Bill the Big Idea."

Don Mike flipped some pepper and salt on his eggs and while doing so proceeded to elucidate.

"If I had two projects in mind—one for irrigation and one for power, I would not, of course, unless I happened to be a public service corporation engaged in producing and selling electric power, consider for a moment wasting my time monkeying with the hydro-electric buzz-saw. Indeed, I would have to sell it, for with the juice developed here I could not hope to compete in a limited field with the established power companies. I would proceed to negotiate the sale of this by-product to the highest bidder. Bill, do you know that I've seen enough flood water running down the San Gregorio every winter to have furnished, if it could have been stored in Agua Caliente basin, sufficient water to irrigate the San Gregorio Valley for five years?"

"I know it, Miguel."

(Continued on page 146)

THIS IS A STORY THAT YOU WILL WANT TO THINK ABOUT



Rosamond slipped her arm wheedlingly through his. "Turn traitor to him, Gabe—it'll serve him right. Listen—this is a wondrous fox-trot."

Altar Fires

A Study of Three Kinds of Love

By Dana Gatlin

Illustrations by

Grant T. Reynard

PERHAPS when young Gabe Siddons gains the wisdom that comes only when youth goes, then he may at last grasp what Rosamond Hightower did for him.

When Governor Hightower brought his young wife home all Blue Mound admired her beauty and charm, but Gabe Siddons fairly worshipped.

Youth's altar fires are nearly all, sooner or later, forsaken; that matters nothing; all depends on whether they burn clear and bright to their natural end or whether they are quenched by an untimely and bitter tide of disillusion. The Governor must have been twenty-five years Rosamond's senior, but as he had been in the State legislature two terms and then in the Lieutenant-Governor's chair for one, besides being president of the soundest bank and owner of the most influential newspaper in the county—not to mention having the handsomest residence in town—Blue Mound deemed the beautiful young bride a lucky girl.

Blue Mound had a fair smattering of the bride's history and knew she had been poor. Her father, long a power in affairs at the capital city, had given his motherless child the superior advantages traditionally associated with the extra rich; she had been sent to a finishing school back East and then to Europe for her music. Then an ill-starred oil boom had knocked the bottom out of his riches, and despondency had so aggravated some chronic malady that he sickened and died; and the spoiled, pampered Rosamond had returned hurriedly home to find herself not a butterfly heiress but an orphan with her living to make. Through sympathetic friends of her father's a place had been made for her in the then Lieutenant-Governor's office—some kind of secretarial position, but leading to this fairy-tale dénouement.

Yes, Blue Mound was sure that Rosamond Hightower was a lucky girl. But, as young Gabe Siddons looked at it, Governor Hightower was the lucky one. Of course the Governor was a prince of a fellow, but he was an old, old man—nearly fifty. And Rosamond was—well, she was Rosamond.

Gabe was not quite nineteen. He was just home from his first year at college; a rather shy, sensitive boy, but in his heart terribly ashamed of his diffidence, resenting it, always picturing himself as a debonair, easy-mannered chap of the world, but somehow never able to drag this mental ideal out into actuality. However, had he been the cocky young worldling his wistful fancy painted, he probably would never have made the appeal he did to Rosamond Hightower, would never have gained that sweet intimacy of friendship.

He never forgot his first compelling vision of her.

The Hightower place was across the street from the Siddons bungalow and occupied the whole of a square block.

The morning after Gabe's arrival home from college, he wandered out on the bungalow porch and, naturally, began to take in the new glories next door. He heard voices and noticed that there was a tennis-court on the further side of the house; he couldn't see the net but, as she guarded or swerved back the ball, a girl ran intermittently into his range of vision. She was fairly tall, slim and wonderfully graceful. She had on a striped pink frock and had dark hair. She flashed back and forth so quickly that she was out of sight before he could distinguish her features. But, while he still loitered she came round the house, flung aside her racket and sank down on the portico steps in full view. Following her closely was Ned Cottle—Ned always was a lucky guy!

Unaware of what he was doing, Gabe stared at the girl in the striped pink frock. She was the prettiest girl he'd ever seen—only pretty didn't half describe her. Her hair was of the smooth, shiny black kind that gleams like satin where the light strikes it; it was parted in the middle and drawn simply down and twisted into "buns" over each ear. Her skin was very white save for a wavering pink in her cheeks which matched the stripe in her frock. She had a very short upper lip; and, beneath wide, dark brows as delicately arched as a swallow's wing, eyes of the deepest, clearest, vividest, startlingest blue you can imagine.

"Hello there, Gabe! When d'you get home?"

Ned's salutation, natural enough and to be expected, startled Gabe. He gave a little jump, withdrew his gaze from the girl, felt stupid, and tried to make his own tone nonchalant as he answered,

"Last night. When did you?"

"Oh, nearly a week ago—have had six days of excitement in the little old burg. Come on over and tell us how's everything."

Gabe envied Ned his off-hand manner; he longed to "come on over," to see the divinity in the pink-striped frock at closer range, but he stuttered some imbecilic excuse and turned back toward his own house. When he drifted out to the kitchen where his mother was helping the colored girl put up strawberries, he asked,

"Who's the queen visiting over at the Governor's?"

"Queen?"

"Well, girl then. Who is she?"

"Why, I didn't know they had anybody visiting there."

"Well, they have—the prettiest girl I ever saw. Shiny black hair and blue eyes—she was playing tennis with Ned Cottle."

"Oh, I guess you mean Mrs. Hightower," said Gabe's mother. "That's the Governor's new wife."

"The Governor's wife?" Gabe's voice expressed a dismay almost comical. Of course he had heard all about the Governor's romance, and he had heard that the bride was young and pretty, but somehow he had never gathered she would be—like this. "Why, she's just a girl," he expostulated.

"She's twenty-five or six years old," replied his mother drily; "almost grown-up, I should say." Mrs. Siddons paused to wipe the perspiration from her flushed face. "You'd think she could find something better to do, at this hour of the morning, than romping like a hoyden with a mere child like Ned Cottle!"

Gabe reddened a little at that "mere child." Ned Cottle was a whole year older than himself; he didn't like to hear a creature of such grace described as a "hoyden," either; but, not knowing how to undertake a defense, he only essayed,

"Well, I expect the Governor keeps plenty of help to do the work, doesn't he?"

"Two maids." In a succinct tone which conveyed that this prodigality of servants but made matters the worse.

Mrs. Siddons spoke as if housewifely negligence were a sort of crime; but Gabe hadn't yet reached the age of man where culinary expertness is a chief feminine virtue. He ambled away, feeling vaguely that his mother's criticism of the beautiful neighbor was harsh and unjust.

After the midday dinner Gabe betook himself to the porch, and then, saunteringly, to the yard; he had no fixed aim in his strollings, but some irresistible force drew him to the side of the yard nearest the Governor's. And out in the Governor's garden he caught sight of the striped pink dress. This time she was alone. She was snipping roses which she dropped into a basket. She glanced up, met his eyes, and he

came near turning and slipping back to the house. But even as he meditated flight she smiled straight at him, a bewildering flash of a smile, and came a few steps toward him.

"I was just going to send these over to your mother," she called in a clear, sweetly penetrating voice and holding up the basket of roses. "Perhaps you'd like to come and help pick them."

Both delighted and frightened at this swift fulfilment of his secret wishes, Gabe crossed the road and joined her in the garden.

"You're Gabe Siddons, aren't you?" she said friendly, proffering her hand. "I've heard all about you—your mother's been counting the hours this past week. And you probably know I'm Rosamond Hightower—so we don't need a formal introduction, do we?"

Gabe, shaking hands with a sort of tingling gingerliness, longed for the ability to make some brilliant reply; but though an intense sensation of well-being was surging through his being, it made him feel all the more confused, stupid. He hardly knew what he was saying when, because he must say something, he mumbled:

"I like your name—it's one of my favorite names. And it just suits you."

"I'm glad you like it; but why do you say it suits me?" she asked, still smiling.

"I don't know why, exactly—" Then, his embarrassment giving way to a tremulous impulse of daring: "It means 'rose of the world,' doesn't it?"

"Oh, do you speak French?" she asked eagerly, not seeming to notice he had been daring at all.

"I was conditioned in French this last semester," he confessed, rueful but honest.

"Perhaps I can help you rub up on it a bit this summer," she suggested, pleasantly. "You can write out exercises and I can correct them. I'd really love it!—if it wouldn't bore you—on your vacation."

Bore him! French had bored him. But a teacher like this! Gabe felt like rushing for his exercise-book immediately. How sweet she was in her generosity! But it would be selfishly mean to take advantage of such exquisite unselfishness—to let her

drub away just for his benefit. So he made himself demur:

"I guess it's you who would be bored."

"Oh, no; I'd love it. And it would help fill up my time; some days there's so little to do."

She spoke with the utmost simplicity, still smiling her engaging smile, but somehow those phrases echoed oddly in the boy's head: "help fill up the time"—"there's so little to do." However, as he gazed covertly, she observed with that quaint, amused stir at the corners of her lips which he was to adore as one of her most adorable characteristics:

"Perhaps you'd better take these flowers now—your mother may prefer them unwilted. But you must come back again soon. We'll start at the French, and you can tell me about your school, and then perhaps you'll let me play for you. You like music, don't you?"

"No," said Mrs. Siddons. "I don't believe the Governor went with them."



"I'm
"Oh,
poetry!
That
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never co
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towers!



"Your imagination's running away with you, dear," said Rosamond. "We're still the best pals in the world. Here, I'll prove to you I'm still fond of you——"

"I'm crazy about it—but how did you know?"
"Oh, I knew," sagely. "And you like books, too—even like poetry! I foresee we're going to be great friends."
That's exactly what they did speedily become—great friends. Mrs. Siddons complained that Gabe might almost as well have never come home for his vacation, for all the companionship she got from him; he was forever "mooning round" at the Hightowers! But Mr. Siddons took an indulgent view of the matter.

He pointed out that all youths, at one time or another, had to go through the experience of "mooning round" an older woman; Gabe was more fortunate than some in having fallen under the spell of a woman so essentially sweet and sound as Rosamond Hightower. She wouldn't do him any harm. She was doing him decided good so far as his French was concerned.
As for young Gabe, he was engrossed in just enjoying existence by the day. The daily "lesson" was magically divested of its

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drudgery; there were marvelous hours when they took turns reading aloud from books they both liked. Or, more subtly enjoyable still were the times she would play or sing for him. She seemed to love to do that, and would play or sing by the hour. She would chat about his

life at school, not patronizingly at all but interestedly, and as though nineteen's point of view were the only one; and, out of his shy reserve, she would draw his ambitions.

Usually he'd feel like a fool to discuss aspirations so terribly vague and fugitive, but with her he somehow didn't feel ridiculous. He wanted to be a writer; or maybe an artist—he didn't know exactly; it is so hard sometimes to know, exactly, just what you crave to be. Only he did know that he didn't want to be in the brick-plant, as his father had in mind for him; Siddons *père* already saw that sign-board flaunting itself over the building down there by the railroad crossing—"Siddons & Siddons."

"Don't worry about it, Gabe," reassured Rosamond sympathetically. "You'll find yourself some day. You have three years in college yet; then, one day, perhaps all of a sudden, it will be quite clear just what you wish to do. But d'you know what I think that wish will be?"

"What?"

"To have that signboard painted as soon as possible—'Siddons & Siddons!'"

"Oh, no!" denied Gabe reproachfully.

"But perhaps 'yes.' It may be mighty pleasant to step into an assured little income. Art may hand out nothing but rebuffs in return for your devoted service, for years and years."

"As if I wouldn't be ready to go through all that! You expect discouragements—don't mind 'em!—"

"You do if there's a sweet girl depending on you for three meals a day, my dear," nodding with an air of amused understanding.

Gabe flushed hotly. "But there won't be a girl! I mean—"

He broke off, acutely embarrassed, acutely uncomfortable, but as usual at a loss for concrete words.

"Gabe Siddons, do you mean to tell me you never expect to fall in love?" bantering, but in tone and look caressingly indulgent.

Gabe didn't answer.

"You've been in love a half-dozen times already—look at me—don't dare deny it!"

Gabe didn't dare deny it. Half-shamed, images floated before him: black-eyed, snappy-tongued Betsy Smith whose books he used to carry senior year in high school; the gray-eyed girl, affectedly languorous, who sold text-books in the college supply-store; his room-mate's visiting sister from the South with her melting brown orbs and mellifluous drawl. . . .

Yes, there had been more than a half-dozen of them. The images had all gone on their way—he, now, almost hated them in retrospect; certainly he hadn't been actually "in love," yet he felt abashed, shrank from meeting Rosamond's bantering gaze.

She laughed aloud at his guilty look, then suddenly became contrite.

"I'm sorry I tried to pry into your sentimental past—I really am, Gabe. And I'll try not to be a busybody about that sweet girl of the future. But I think I'm going to be jealous of her, in a way. You won't mind if I'm the least little bit jealous, will you?—it'll be a fairly nice kind of jealousy, without any venom in it."

She smiled at him, the sweetest possible smile, and Gabe couldn't have helped smiling back even had he wished not to. Then they both laughed. The episode ended on a light-hearted note. It left Gabe convinced that there was nothing in the world more lovable than this older woman who was, miraculously, his close friend; nothing more satisfying and inspiring and life-giving than the emanation of her friendliness and charm.

Gabe, during those weeks and months, lived in a sort of swimming ecstasy, poignantly blissful despite the absolute absence of any feeling of rest. Jealousy, or any of the usual tortures associated with "being in love," had nothing to do with his restlessness; he could be away from her without suffering augmented pangs—for hours with her or away from her were alike in her possession.

As Gabe never thought of her as in any sense attainable, when Rosamond's presence was for some reason denied, he actually used to find his second-best satisfaction in the company of the Governor.

The ex-Lieutenant-Governor of the state and Blue Mound's leading citizen quite looked his distinguished part. He was a tall, long-legged, sparsely-built man, generally dressed in loose-fitting pleasantly-toned tweed, with thinning gray hair, a lean face, a mobile, good-humored mouth, and shrewd but marvelously kind eyes behind their gold-mounted nose-glasses. Blue Mound loved its "Governor" as much as it esteemed him.

Gabe had loved him since the days of shaverdom when he used to be taken along on thrilling rides behind a certain high-stepping trotter and be permitted, for brief but thrilling moments, to hold the reins himself! These days, as the protector and guardian of Rosamond, a new warm reverence had crept into the boy's longstanding affection.



"I've heard all about you," she said. "And you probably know that I'm Rosamond Hightower—so we don't need a formal introduction, do we?"

and shimmering with idealism. When she's an old woman people will forget she's an old woman, she'll be so sparkling and gay and brave and dear. We've got to feed that in her, my boy—the strain of shining youthfulness which endures."

This long and unusual speech left

Yes, it was a quaint sort of tie, fraternal in a way, which now bound the youth to the man twice and a half his age. Together they would commune on Rosamond's waywardnesses and gentleness, her caprices and her charms. And together they used to stand in the doorway of the "ball room" at the Masonic Hall and, with oddly similar indulgence, watch her going round and round, a graceful, animated flower, in the arms of Ned Cottle or some other young sprig who excelled in the modern steps.

For Rosamond loved to dance, and insisted on never missing a session of the club which met fortnightly in the Masonic Hall. The Governor always accompanied her, although, as he put it, his "dancing days were over without ever having begun." And Gabe, inept with his feet despite his love of music and rhythm, preferred to join that tall, proprietary figure in the doorway, just to stand and watch.

At first Gabe felt a degree of envy, of resentment, toward Ned Cottle and those other bland and dexterous fellows; but the Governor's lightly uttered comments, at the very first dance, had acted as a balm:

"Well, I guess you and I, Gabe, will have to console each other. Dancing's for the young, eh?"

Gabe looked a little bewildered, and the Governor, with that good-humored twist to his lips and a twinkle behind his glasses, went on:

"Never mind, old chap; there's another kind of youth—the spirit of youth—that's better; it doesn't have to grow old along with graying hair and hardening muscles. We'll still be young when those wild scamps out there are fossilizing slowly of congealed arteries. They are a wild lot—that Ned Cottle and his cronies."

Then, with seeming irrelevance: "I'm glad Rosamond has had you this summer, Gabe—you've been no end of a blessing to her."

"A blessing?" queried Gabe, much flattered but more bewildered than ever.

The older man didn't answer at once, nor then directly; his face had taken on the faintest shade of brooding, though his lips still wore their habitual good-humored expression.

"Well, our Rosamond is not prosaically single-sided for all her exquisite simplicity," he said. "The volatile, the irresponsible make appeal to her—those young blades out there help feed the restless side of her nature." He paused for a fractional moment.

"And that's quite natural—with the exciting, varied sort of youth she'd had." Another slight pause. "But she's got a saner, sweeter side to her youthfulness, too—steadfast and loyal

Gabe tremendously moved by its confidential strain. He was stirred profoundly by the way the Governor spoke of his wife; he had never before heard a woman talked of in this way—that is, a real woman whom you actually knew, not a heroine in a book. The Governor was talking in a matter-of-fact enough manner, yet he seemed somehow to put her in the domain of visions. And, delighted with this idea, the boy would probably have lost himself enlarging on it had not, just then, Rosamond in the flesh advanced upon them.

She had escaped from her cavalier, was alone, but flushed and radiant.

"Jimmy dear, won't you dance just this once? Do try it!"

The Governor smiled at her. "Gabe and I have agreed that dancing's for the young."

Then she slipped her arm wheedlingly through Gabe's.

"Turn traitor to him, Gabe—it'll serve him right. Listen!—this is a wonderful fox-trot."

But the terrors of the pedal intricacies demanded by that thrumming "one-two-three-four" overcame even the beguilement of her hand on his arm. So Gabe remained with the Governor while one of the "young blades" came and carried her away. He watched her gliding over the floor, watched younger girls eye her with critical appraisal or ill-concealed envy, watched other youths cast longing glances and vie for her dances. But now, he watched with entire indulgence. To think that, at the start, he had been a little jealous of Ned Cottle and those others!

There was to be a long respite yet, many months, before Gabe was to discover the true and ugly meaning of that word jealousy. Not until after he had undergone the infinitely less cruel pangs of separation when he must return to college and after he had come home again, for the Christmas holidays, and met the new man who was in charge of the Governor's Blue Mound newspaper.

A week or so before he left for college in the fall Gabe first heard of this new editor the Governor was importing. He got the news in a general way through village report. Then, one Friday, the weekly edition of the *Beacon* carried an account of the impending change and a eulogy of the coming editor. Gabe read it idly, not particularly interested until he came to the name of this brilliant young man soon to arrive. Byron Baxter—Byron Baxter—Where had he heard that name? Then it came to him: he had heard Rosamond speak of Byron Baxter. She had called him "By;" speaking of him in some chance reminis-

cence, but her use of that diminutive implying a considerable degree of familiarity. Gabe at once became more interested in the advent of this stranger and, at the earliest opportunity, began asking Rosamond questions.

Was she a little elusive at first, or did he just fancy it? Oh yes, she admitted, she'd probably mentioned "By" Baxter—he was a friend from away back. "A very good friend?" Gabe opined, persistent in the face of her evident and somewhat puzzling uncommunicativeness. Again an admittive yes.

Gabe felt slightly chilled, felt an old surge of dislike for that presumptuous little sweetheart of long ago; but it *was* long ago—Gabe knew he was absurd, and all the more so since Rosamond was now married to another man (to the Governor, whom he liked and who seemed more like her father than a husband). Yet his interest in this stranger, who was so far from being a stranger to her, was increasing by leaps and bounds. He wanted to know all about the present-day "By's" personality—"What's he like? He's good-looking, I suppose—?"

"Yes, he's good-looking—exceptionally so, I should say."

"What's he like?" Gabe persevered.

Then, as if reticent by his tenacity, she made an impatient movement, then shrugged with humorous resignation, and turned on him a peculiar quizzical smile.

"Well, at one time, if you'd asked that, I'd have told you he was the cleverest, and the tenderest, and the exhilaratingest and the truest young gentleman that ever lived!"

Gabe digested this for a moment in rather unhappy silence.

"I suppose you were crazy about him, then," he hazarded at length.

"I suppose I must have been," Rosamond replied. She still regarded him with that quizzical smile, but her face was slightly flushed and her eyes, narrowed a little, were very bright. For the first time Gabe was conscious of hidden reserves in this, his frank and comradely friend; he hazily recollected epithets and phrases out of his reading . . . "the unreadability of woman"—"sphinx-like"—"that something secret and obscure which is in all things feminine. . . ." The notion of woman as mysterious was intriguing, but he preferred Rosamond in her more ordinary, less baffling guise.

"Well," he said, "if you were ever crazy about a fellow, I don't for the life of me see how he ever chanced to—"

Rosamond shrugged again as he ended on the hiatus.

"Oh, 'times change and we change with them,'" she quoted lightly. The last shrug appeared to have shaken her back into her usual merry, candid, un-mysterious seeming. "All that happened long and long ago, you know."

"How long?"

"Good heavens, Gabe!—have you turned into a question machine? Why this indefatigable curiosity about my husband's new managing editor?"

"I guess that's why—wondered what kind of a fellow the Governor'd pick out for managing editor," said Gabe rather lamely.

"You should read the *Beacon*, then; there was an exhaustive and very complimentary write-up, I believe." She stifled a delicate yawn. "My husband first noted his capabilities when By used to cover the State House for one of the Macon City papers—fresh from college then. And he's always kept more or less in touch with By—thought him exceptionally able in a brilliantly gifted way—he only needs somebody to 'hold the reins tight,' Jimmy says. So, when he needed a new editor, and since he's now here at home to 'hold the reins,' he sent for By; I didn't even know of the arrangement till after it was completed."

"I see," said Gabe, though, as it later turned out, he didn't see at all.

"And is my cross-examination now over?" demanded Rosamond, with that smile from her repertoire which Gabe privately deemed the sweetest possible smile in the world. "You see that I'm in no way responsible."

So this episode, like all in which Rosamond figured, ended on a light-hearted note.

In the sweet sorrow of parting from his Adored, he utterly forgot "By" Baxter. Hard to describe the exact flavor of that sadness. Siddons *père* had prophesied to Gabe's mother that within a month the boy would have forgotten his amusing summer "crush."

But Gabe's father was wrong; for Gabe was holding fast to his summer's allegiance.

It mustn't be gathered that this long-distance worship made him consciously unhappy. He spent no time "mooning." But always, high up in the back part of his mind was kept intact the shining throne on which his divinity sat. Sometimes he wouldn't

think of her, not concretely, for days at a stretch. Then a letter would come perhaps, one of her rare letters, brief and containing no particular news, but through its characteristic phrasing breathing the breath of Rosamond herself.

Yes, he was haunted by Rosamond, but having to wait till Christmas-time to see her again did not seem notably terrible. Yet it was the desire to see Rosamond which was partly though unconsciously responsible for his decision to make the long trip home, this year, for the mid-season holiday.

Gabe journeyed in high expectation, in fine fettle—to react, very shortly, to a bitterness so cruel and horrible that, in his despair, he asked himself: "Why can't I just drop dead?—life's too ugly and dreadful to go on living."

It didn't strike him all at once. His first glimmering that there was some change in affairs, something amiss, was fugitive. He had arrived home in time for a held-over supper, and, after eating and exchanging preliminary greetings with his parents, had planned to run right over to the Governor's.

"Why, you can go over if you want to," said his mother, "but you won't find Mrs. Hightower at home. She went to Macon City to-day—to stay over for some concert, I believe."

Was there something almost imperceptibly queer in her manner, her expression? Gabe recalled it only later, when anguish had sharpened his perceptions retroactively; but at the time he was too immersed in disappointment, in a kind of indignant surge to notice.

"Why, she *knew* I was coming to-night!" he blurted out, the sudden disappointment sweeping down his usual shy reserve.

"Well, Mr. Baxter probably had the tickets already bought," explained his mother, not unkindly. "She probably couldn't change her plans."

Mr. Baxter! "By" Baxter! So she'd gone off with *him*! The fellow who'd once seemed to her "the cleverest and tenderest and exhilaratingest and truest young gentleman that ever lived!" . . . And, now, this captivating fellow, this sweetheart of other days, had carried her off—on the very date of his, Gabe's return! Gabe's dislike for the unknown and unglimped Baxter was mounting to hatred.

"Did the Governor go, too?" he asked.

Mrs. Siddons held her needle up against the light to thread it, "No," she answered, squinting at the needle-eye, "I don't believe he went with them."

Gabe fiddled with some objects on the library table.

"I guess the Governor thinks this Mr. Baxter's a pretty smart fellow."

"He must have, to give him such a responsible position."

"What's he like?" still fiddling with those objects on the table.

"Well, he's a very nice-looking young man, and nice-mannered. Very attractive. And he writes really brilliant articles—that is, if he's—"

She paused, as if uncertain whether to continue.

"If he's—what?" Gabe urged.

"Well, if he's sober." Mrs. Siddons completed her sentence somewhat defiant albeit reluctant. "I don't like to repeat gossip, but everybody in town knows Mr. Baxter's weakness by this time. He's attractive and likable, and manages to get out a really unusual paper; but he's not always awfully—responsible. I sometimes wonder why Mrs. Hightower has so much to do with him—and why the Governor lets her." Mrs. Siddons's demeanor somehow conveyed that this rather scandalized amazement, with lurking depths of curiosity beneath it, was the attitude of all onlooking Blue Mound.

"Well," said Gabe at last, "if you don't mind, I think I'll run over and say hello to the Governor."

"Very well, dear." She rose and went with him to the hall, helped him on with his overcoat, gave his sleeve a final, tender pat; affectionate attentions such as are plausible enough from a mother toward her only son just returned home, but Gabe had a queer sense that there was some extra, hidden element in her tender solicitude.

The big house was dark save for one room toward the side and rear. The "Governor," who was unfeignedly glad to see the boy, was sitting back there, in the little "sun parlor" just off the big living-room. It was a gay sanctum, bright with colorful chintz and wicker and rosy-shaded lights, the delicately festive air of the place redolent of Rosamond who had superintended its decoration. The Judge's easy chair was drawn up before a small table on which he was engaged in manipulating a deck of cards.

He looked very comfortable, very domestically cosy, there in that huge wicker chair with the colorful chintz cushion just back of his gray head, with the festive gaiety of the rose-shaded lamps

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coloring the leisurely smoke of his fragrant cigar, with the cheerful leaping and snapping of the wood fire in the open grate just beyond. No, in that warm, bright setting so suggestive of a charming feminine presence, and in his own familiar genial presentment, sitting there relaxed, sending out intermittent wreaths of smoke and sorting and arranging the cards on the table which rubbed elbows with a wicker-stand showing a bit of some delicate needle-work, he looked a man who is supremely at domestic peace with the world.

They talked, in companionable desultory fashion, of events at school and of what had transpired in Blue Mound, of Rosamond and of this new man, Baxter, who was her friend of long standing—they had grown up "like brother and sister, you might say," the Governor offered. Yet for all that geniality, for all that atmosphere of good cheer, Gabe, when he finally said good-night, carried away the oddest impression that the Governor was not as happy as he appeared—as he wished to appear.

The next day Gabe went over to see Rosamond. He found her prettier than ever, merrier than ever, more adorable than ever in her frank, winsome charm. Gabe, more than a little hurt because of that trip with the interloper, Baxter, on the very eve of his own arrival, had rehearsed a demeanor dignified and slightly distant but, under the spell of her presence, at once his heart had gone fluttering like a candle-flame before the altar in a gust of wind. It was so indescribably sweet just to be with her again.

Yes, she was entirely unchanged; entirely the same; and yet . . .

"Why do you stare at me like that?" she asked suddenly.

"Why, was I staring?"

"You certainly were, and I don't like to be stared at! Nor do I like people to turn their back on me, either!" as he shifted his gaze to the window.

Then, before he could make any rejoinder, she jumped up and, pausing only to rest her face for a moment against the roses, moved toward the piano.

"Well, what song will you have?"

"Anything."

"Anything?—then I guess this will do," glancing at the open sheet on the piano. But she continued to gaze at it a full minute, as if hesitant; then, with a strange little shrug, proceeded to play the introductory bars, and to sing:

"Free living, free giving, may scarce be undone.
What magic recaptures the rays of the sun?"

Sap springing, lark singing, and young hearts
afire

With the tender green flame of an April
desire.

It may die, it may lie like brown reeds in
the fen,

But the love that is given, none taketh again."

As of old, the thrilling cadences of her voice, the silver-edged shafts of sound ending hauntingly on a prolonged minor note, went through Gabe's veins like a sweet chill, and he all but lost the drift of the words. But Rosamond, half-turning on the piano-stool, with a faint flash of gaiety over her face, of mockery almost, demanded:

"Well, Monsieur Gabe, tell me—what do you think of that poetic sentiment?"

With a start Gabe tried to collect his befuddled wits.

"I've caught you!" she laughed. "You weren't listening!"

"Yes, I was!" he insisted.

"Well, you were dreaming, too, then," she accused.

"Well," he retorted, "didn't you ever want to dream, as you call it, when you heard a beautiful sound, or saw a beautiful—"

He broke off, once again at a loss for words to imprison a throbbing but shy and fugitive thought.

Rosamond rose, crossed the room swiftly and gave his shoulder a fleeting touch before she sank to the divan beside him.

"Yes, dear, I have," she answered. There was the briefest pause while her head drooped a little; when she spoke her vibrant voice seemed to droop a little, too. "But we are foolish to succumb too much to dreams, my dear; dreams are too beautiful for the workaday world. They are like butterflies—like those roses there; their very beauty makes them too fragile to endure."

Gabe looked at her sharply and, suddenly, astonishing himself, said:

"You're not happy, are you?"

The second the words were out he wondered what had made him say them. For he had never thought of Rosamond as unhappy—Rosamond, the merriest and most joyous of creatures. Even now, with drooping head, she didn't give an effect of actual sadness; it was just a momentary half-darkening of her habitual and invincible inner sunlight—and such as he had witnessed scores of times. Yet, as soon as he had spoken those unpremeditated words, he knew them to be true: Rosamond was not happy, had never been really, intrinsically happy—never since he had known her.

Rosamond looked up at him, startled.

"Not happy?—why, you ridiculous boy! Of course I'm happy; what ever put such an absurd idea in your head?"

"I don't know."

"Well, you're mistaken," and she laughed blithely to prove how mistaken he was. Then she sobered slightly again. "Of course we are all enamored of foolish, childish dreams in our time, and then realities rub the dreams away, like waking rubs away drowsy sleep. Then that kind of beglamored happiness vanishes—you'll find it so some day, dear child, when you're rudely awakened from your beautiful dreaming."

Then, suddenly shifting her mood again, she leaned forward and caught his hand, almost fiercely.

"You're fond of me, Gabe, aren't you?"

"Of course I am—awfully fond of you," muttered poor Gabe.

"I want you to be fond of me. I don't want you ever to stop—I can't tell you how sweet your friendship has been to me. I—"

Just then the telephone out in another room began to ring and Rosamond went to answer it, leaving a ghostly trail of perfume on the air and a jumble of conflicting sensations in the boy. She wanted him always to be fond of her—well, no fear about that!

His attention was drawn by Rosamond's voice, by some unfamiliar quality in it, as she talked yonder at the telephone—a subtle note of unusualness which magnetized

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his ears, strainingly, to her low-spoken, scarcely distinguishable words:

"... Eight-thirty, then ... but no more sulkiness, mind ... good-by ..."

He heard the receiver click into place, and seemed to hear a responsive echo of the sound, dreadful and foreboding, somewhere in his own being.

"It was By Baxter, phoning about the dance to-night," she said casually; "it's the Club night, you know. By the way, Gabe, you must go with us, as usual."

"You mean with you and the Governor?" While that "as usual," even before she spoke to confirm his suspicious intuition, rang mockingly in his ears.

"Oh, no, Jimmy's not going—he loathes such affairs, you know; he's given over his frivolous responsibilities to By—with rather unflattering readiness, I fear!"

She spoke lightly and Gabe tried to smother his formless apprehensions. But even the knowledge of his recently acquired perfection in the new steps didn't suffice to elate him. So, with his mood all criss-cross to start with, small wonder Gabe didn't enjoy that dance.

He didn't even want to display his new dexterity—not now; he preferred just to lounge in the doorway, although now unsustained by that tall, lean proprietary figure who had once shared proprietorship with him. He stood there alone in his restless and unnamed suffering watching the flower that was Rosamond skim through the garden of dancers. Contrary to former like occasions, he'd have been grateful to see her dancing with Ned Cottle or some other of those "young blades," but this boon came all too rarely; for the most part she was in the arms of By Baxter.

Watching them from the doorway, the boy's heart grew heavier and heavier. He thought: "If he's an old friend and if she likes him I ought not to mind—only I do mind! I wonder what they're talking about—they seem to have a lot to say—if I could only hear! ... Why aren't they talking now? They haven't said a word for three rounds of the floor—just gazing into space as they dance. Why don't they talk? ..."

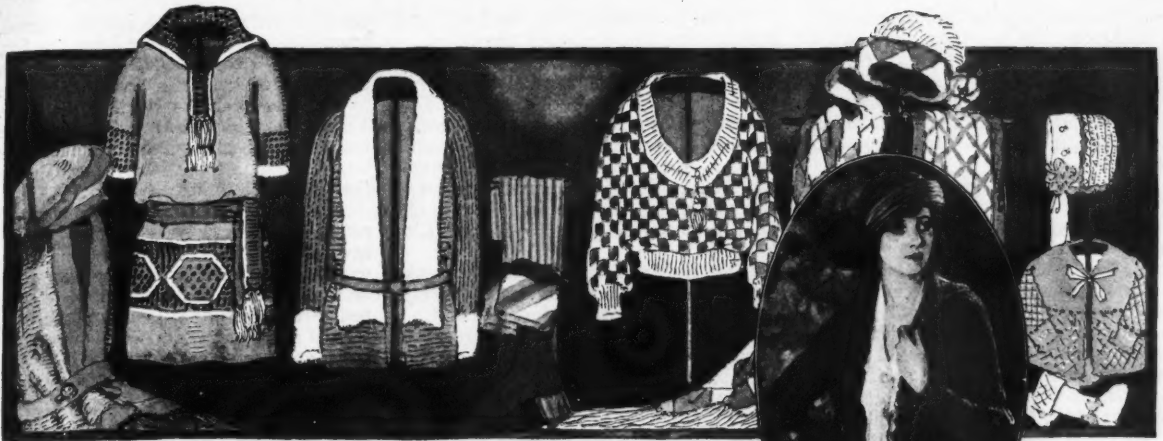
He had not known one could feel such numb misery.

Presently he began to want to hurt her, too. A mean feeling, perhaps—besides, how could he hurt her? She thought him only a child—anyway didn't think a tenth as much of him, likely, as of this fellow she'd known for years and years. . . .

Ned Cottle sauntered up to him with hateful banter about being a "wall flower." Ned stayed with him for the duration of one cigarette. He confided, with a sly wink, that some of the fellows were going up to Macon City Saturday on a "lark"—Gabe should come along, he said. Gabe, reddening uncomfortably, stumbled a little over his excuses, and Ned laughed as he threw away his stub and sauntered back across the polished floor.

After he was gone it flashed over Gabe that here, perhaps, was a way to hurt Rosamond; he could go up to town, get beastly drunk and generally make a fool of himself; then, when Rosamond found out and learned it was all her fault at bottom, she was bound to feel sorry, remorseful. But swiftly Gabe brushed the mad, ignoble notion aside—it was too horrible even to contemplate.

At the evening's end By Baxter made



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anything pure water
alone won't harm

one small atonement for his long monopoly of Rosamond; he had them drop him at the house where he lodged, thus permitting Gabe to see Rosamond on home, alone.

She lingered a moment at the door.

"I'm afraid you didn't have an awfully good evening, Gabe," her voice softly regretful.

"Oh, yes, I had a good time," he lied stiffly.

She fumbled for her key in her bag but, finding it, still made no movement to enter. She stood for what seemed a long time motionless, and for that long period stared straight in front of her at the chill, moon-white night. Yet it couldn't have been so very long, scarcely a full minute, before she gave a little shiver and drew her cloak closer about her and thrust one hand out of the furry edges.

"Ugh, it's cold! — I must hurry in. Good-night, dear boy."

Gabe took her hand—it was icy cold—but his voice was sullen as he retorted:

"You call me 'dear boy,' and you say you want me to always be fond of you, but *you*—" He choked, then finished; "*You've* changed."

"Changed?" with a quick, sidewise glance. "Why, how do you mean, Gabe?"

"Oh, I don't know—but you're not the same toward me as you used to be."

"Your imagination's running away with you, dear. I haven't changed toward you—not a bit. I haven't been feeling well—maybe that's it; but you mustn't pay any attention. We're still the best pals in the world. Here, I'll prove to you I'm still fond of you—"

Her kiss on his forehead was light, feathery and soft as a snowflake, and then she was gone.

Gabe tried to keep the feel of that imprint on his forehead as he undressed, tried to still his apprehensions with all the caress symbolized. But long after he went to bed his eyelids stayed wide open else pressed a burning weight against his smarting eyeballs. For, despite any protestations to the contrary, he knew things *were* changed; and he knew that this change had brought Rosamond unhappiness.

All during the following day he had been unable to see Rosamond, to get in touch with her. He had run over informally in the morning, in the old way, only to be told by the maid that Mrs. Hightower was indisposed with a headache. Then later, around noon, when he phoned to ask how she was feeling, he learned she had "gone out." He felt rebuffed; if Rosamond was able to go out that "headache" surely couldn't have been so bad!

His mother noticed his querulous lack of appetite at the table and, surmising the cause, made rather tactless comment.

"I wouldn't let Rosamond Hightower put me in such a bad humor if I were you," she said. "I'm afraid she's not worth it."

"Not worth it—what d'you mean by that?" demanded Gabe indignantly, but with a sinking weight in his heart.

Mrs. Siddons' brows puckered worriedly. "I don't know just what to say, Gabe—I've been dreading this when you came back. But I think you ought to know. Rosamond Hightower has certainly been acting very indiscreetly—the whole town's talking about it. Of course we were all fond of her—she has an unusually lovable disposition—but there are some things you simply can't overlook."

"What's she done that's so bad?" still maintaining that indignant tone.

"Oh, I don't say she's done anything *bad*," looking more worried than ever.

"It's just that she's—indiscreet. *Very* indiscreet. It's a pity Byron Baxter ever came to this town—and in the Governor's employ, too! Well . . . Blue Mound's too small a place for a married woman to carry on a flirtation like that—even if she does keep running up to Macon City with it!"

"Oh, Byron Baxter!" trying to make his tone negligibly contemptuous. "Everybody ought to know *he's* just a—pal."

"A pal!—fiddlesticks!" and Mrs. Siddons pursed her lips.

Gabe pushed aside his untasted dessert—his favorite jelly pudding—and, muttering an excuse, left the table and went up to his room. After a while he came down and said he was going down-town. From the window his mother watched him down the street, that anxious pucker still between her eyes.

In front of the Hightowers' Gabe encountered the Governor just coming out with a bag; he said he was off to Macon City on business for a day or two, and suggested that Gabe run in that evening to keep Rosamond from being lonely.

Gabe promised to do so and swung on down the street, feeling a trifle reassured. The Governor's manner had seemed so normally cheerful, there in the bright sunlight, that his mother's vague hints and his own forebodings seemed suddenly ridiculous.

But down-town, on the corner of the Square, he ran into Ned Cottle and Ned, the very first thing, greeted:

"What're *you* doing so far from your beauteous inamorata? Found you've been supplanted during your absence, eh?"

Gabe hated Ned's playful-mocking tone as much as that unpleasant word "inamorata." And Ned's smiling, slickly good-looking face, so much older in sophistication than in years, was so repulsive to him at that moment that he couldn't at once bring himself to answer.

"Well," Ned went on, "I guess Baxter's standing in your shoes all right—and then some!" Ned grinned, though not with special malevolence; he probably did not intend malice—merely wished to tease.

He contrived to get through the evening meal, under his parent's exaggeratedly cheerful regard, and then betook himself to Rosamond. As he crossed the lawn he heard her at the piano, and instead of ringing the door-bell at once, he obeyed a childish impulse, a more than childish craving, and stole to a window to see whether he could get one unobserved peep at her, sitting sweet and unsuspecting at the piano, through a little aperture of light beneath one of the drawn shades.

He crouched and peeped through the narrow slit, and then froze at what he saw. Byron Baxter was bending over her . . . he leaned closer, an indescribably soft and rapt expression transfiguring his vivid, handsome features; his darkly glowing eyes had a thirsty look, seemed to drink eagerly of her averted face . . . there was something so timorously bold, so wildly palpitant in that look of love, as it descended closer and closer, that Gabe, for all his fury and terror and frozen despair, quivered at the sight of it. Suddenly the man dropped his head and, while the hands on

the keyboard paused on a jangling discord, began kissing her hair, her brow, her lips. Gabe seemed to feel those kisses through the space of the room and through the frosty glass—swift, hurried, impassioned. Then he saw Rosamond's face—her face transfigured, beglamoured, too, an ineffable bright swimming mistiness in her eyes—God, that look in her eyes! . . .

Then, as he crouched there, shiveringly petrified, Gabe saw her suddenly jump up, saw her escape from those possessive arms, dart aside; heard remotely what seemed to be impassioned argument, mutual protests—reproachful yet tender on her part, excited and inflamed on his. He saw that other approach her again, saw her withdraw with an impatiently impetuous gesture—they passed from his range of vision.

But, God, that look in her eyes! Rosamond!—his Rose of the World!

And there under her window, the boy threw himself down on the ground in the shadow, buried his face, and choked back horrible, dry, soul-wrenching sobs. The boy, prostrate in the snow, thought he must die—prayed to die. But the moon shone on with its cold dispassionate brilliance, and the wind continued its prankish, unloving game; what did it matter to them if one frail human midge suffered? The whole Scheme is so big, and each passing individual such a tiny scrap of it. The next morning Gabe secretly telephoned Ned Cottle and arranged to go up to town with "the fellows."

It was a considerable triumph for the latter, for the shy, exemplary Gabe had long—objectionably though innocently—been held up as a sort of model of conduct by staid Blue Mound. But the story of his fall is not thereby made less sad.

Now Macon City is not an outstandingly large metropolis as great cities go, but it is the metropolis of that section; and a certain element derives a certain satisfaction from the fact that it maintains a quarter of artificially stimulated gaiety and cheaply glittering wickedness. And Gabe's new boon companions knew this quarter. Fortunately, perhaps, the pace set by "the fellows" moved them so swiftly that it hurled them onto disaster before any serious basic disaster was accomplished. A boisterous party growing more and more boisterous as it moved from one scene of divertisement to another—laughing, drinking, shouting, racking, and the devil take anyone who didn't like it. But the devil didn't take the stocky, flabby-faced, hard-fisted "bouncer" who didn't like that last rough-house scrimmage they staged—the police took the roysterers, instead. So it was at the police-station the frolic wound up, and Gabe, along with the others, minus a bond, had a fine prospect of lodging for a night in a cell.

He was too befuddled, too sick at the time, to realize that Ned Cottle was busy at the telephone; Ned chanced to know that Governor Hightower was in town and where he stopped, and it was the Governor who bailed Gabe out of deepening ignominy.

The next evening Rosamond called to see Gabe as he lay sick in bed in his own room at home. He was sick from a bad cold he had taken, sick from the alcohol which still poisoned his system, sick from the look which mutely stabbed him from his mother's eyes, but unutterably sicker

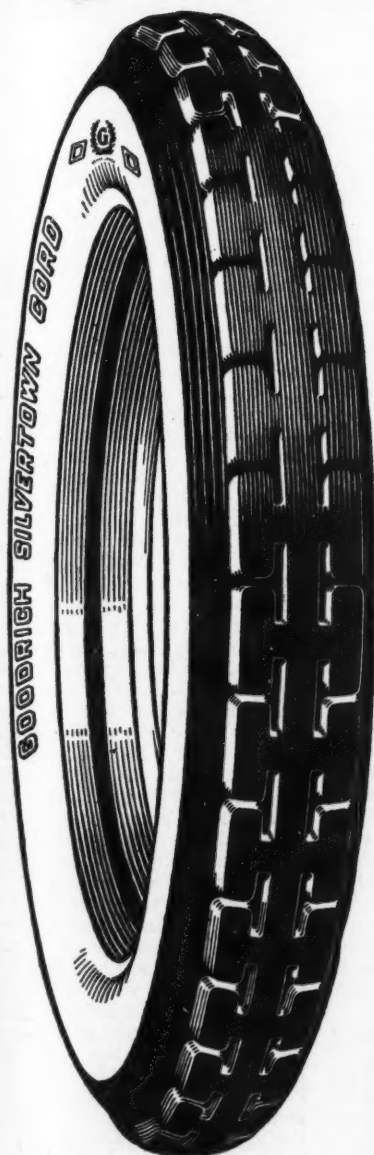
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from the remorse and self-disgust which nauseated him to the roots of his soul.

And all the sickness of body and of soul seemed to gather itself and to seethe in a great mass of revulsion as he saw Rosamond enter the room. She had on a plain frock which made her look all the paler; she was unnaturally white, and had dark hollows under her eyes—all that customary indescribable glow seemed to have been extinguished, even the sheen of her hair seemed dulled.

She came in alone, advanced silently to his bedside; made a move as if to take his hand, then dropped her own listlessly as he made no responsive movement.

"Your mother said I might see you," she began. "The Governor and I are starting South in the morning—a long trip. I wanted to say good-by."

"That's awfully good of you," making his voice formally polite.

Suddenly her composure dropped away from her and she caught his hand.

"Oh, Gabe, don't look at me like that—I can't bear it! What's got into you?—you're not yourself at all!"

"I'm sick," he muttered. "Went on a spree—drank too much," defiantly.

"Yes, I know—oh, Gabe, how could you? You've almost broken your mother's heart."

"Well, I don't presume to imagine I could break yours," he inflected with bitter significance.

She relinquished his lax hand and turned away and leaned her head against the post of the bed. She stood there, motionless, for what seemed a long time; when she faced him again she gazed at him sorrowfully, but straightforwardly.

"I won't pretend not to know what you mean. I think I understood how you felt, even before the Governor said—certain things. But nevertheless, Gabe, I'm not the sort of person you think I am."

The boy, still unrelenting, made no answer, and she moved to the window; stonily he watched her profile silhouetted palely against the blackness of the panes, watched her lips barely move as she repeated:

"No, really I'm not that sort of person. You have a bad opinion of me—but you don't understand."

Then swiftly, tumultuously, she ran to the bedside, flung herself on her knees, and clasped his head between her two hands. By a sort of blind and desperate effort the boy sought to resist, but she clasped his head closer, speaking hurriedly and vehemently:

"And I hope you may never understand—may never know the torture of it. There are fine words in our language, dear, such as truth, fidelity, uprightness and honor—but heaven help you if you've ever got to put them to the test."

Her voice had died down; in scarcely more than a whisper, but the hushed tones so grave and sad that they resounded in his heart like the tolling of a bell, she proceeded:

"For there's another word that can put all the others to rout—almost. They call it 'love.' But it's a thing that's beyond words altogether. A thing that seems too beautiful for you to see beyond it—even though you know it's false beauty—know that it's founded on actual unworthiness, on ugliness. Though the unworthiness and ugliness flicker before you over and over, still it shines and beckons—seems so dear—

Cosmopolitan for August, 1921

draws you on. Till the future seems nothing. And self-sacrifice is sweet—and sacrifice of everything and everybody else means nothing."

The hushed whispering died away. Her head drooped down to rest against the coverlet. For several seconds there came from her no stir, and no sound. But Gabe, with those touching cadences still ringing in his ears, feeling the pressure of her hands against his temples, catching the faint and irregular pulsation of her heart, and breathing the faint fragrance of her perfume—her own particular fragrance the name of which he never knew and which he was never to forget—felt the last vestige of hardness and bitterness and antagonism melt in a great, warm tide. A vast, glowing, indeterminate tide of tenderness; shot through with tingling little aches yet somehow bringing a strange and unsuspected immensity of peace. Despite his pain he had not known such rest and quietude for days. And he discovered in himself an enormous fatigue, a longing to remain where he was, unmoving with Rosamond unmoving, in this wordless tender communion, till the end of time.

But suddenly she stirred; and, wistful and sad, very much as a child might have spoken, she said:

"You'll try, after the Governor and I have gone away—and after you're back in school with all those nice young friends of yours—you'll try not to hold too bad an opinion of me, won't you, dear?"

For a minute he gazed back into those eyes like melted, swimming sapphires, unable to answer. When his voice came it was husky and inarticulate:

"Oh, Rosamond—whatever you should do—however you should torment and hurt me—I'll adore you to the end of my life."

She bent swiftly forward and, opening her arms widely, kissed him. Heaven only knew for whom that farewell kiss was really intended, really seeking. And the lad, craving from it to derive a meed of bliss, didn't allow himself to conjecture.

After Gabe returned to college his wound healed slowly, though he retained no vindictive or evil feeling toward Rosamond. The following summer he spent traveling with a group of college mates in the far West. Before he returned to Blue Mound again Governor Hightower had won a congressional election and had removed with his wife to Washington. Another editor held By Baxter's place on the newspaper. By was gone; and, with the townspeople, the gust of gossip which implicated the Governor's wife had blown over before it ever grew into scandal; by and by, the town was as proud of beautiful and gracious Mrs. Hightower as it was of her distinguished husband—indeed, her charm and tact were accredited with being a great help to her husband's career.

Though fate arranged it so that Gabe Siddons didn't see Rosamond Hightower again for several years, her memory lingered with him, intrinsically untarnished, and growing more and more sweet. True, she had once made him suffer, but somehow she had speedily ameliorated the keenest pain. Perhaps when Gabe Siddons has grown old and wise, he will see the episode in its true perspective and realize what Rosamond Hightower did for him. And realize what—had she quenched that young adoring flame with bitter disillusionment—she might have done.

Kelly of Charles Street

(Continued from page 47)

Kelly said that she had had and that he did.

"Then what did you do?" she asked.

"Walk with him?"

"Yes," acknowledged Kelly.

Audrey giggled. "Tell me about it," she suggested.

Kelly hesitated. Then, very resolutely, "I won't," she announced. "And I'm not going to plague him any more. He's nice—if old-maidish—"

"Old-maidish!" retorted Audrey indignantly. "You ought to see him play polo."

"I'd like to," admitted Kelly. "But I don't mean physically—but mentally. He—oh, he makes me feel as if I *must* poke him, but I'm not going to. So!"

Which, presumably, ended it. But Audrey was never without resource. As she seated herself at her desk her husband looked up from his paper.

"Who are you writing to?" he asked.

"Little boys shouldn't ask questions," she answered. Then blotting first the upper part of the address she had just written and after that the "Va" beneath she added, "Anonymous letters are terrible things but—well, either the end justifies the means or else I'm eternally blamed!"

"You talk like a double acrostic," he assured her.

"Such," she retorted sweetly, "was my intention."

The fact was, however, that having started an experiment in human chemicals she was thickening the mixture a bit.

The letter she had just written would, she felt sure, precipitate a crisis of some sort.

Audrey adored a crisis of any sort!

In the meantime there could be no action for several days anyway. Audrey settled herself to wait in patience, but amended that program when it occurred to her that she might stir up Roger a bit.

So she called him up, three nights later at his apartment.

"I'm worried about Kelly, Roger," she said. "She—don't you think she's rather young and reckless to be running around loose the way she is?"

"I had some such idea, but it never occurred to me that you would—"

"How can you say such a thing?" she broke in reproachfully. "But I suppose I mustn't bother you if you're busy—I just hoped that perhaps you had some news of her."

With which she hung up.

Roger stood, looking across the Charles to where the lights of Cambridge made a fairy necklace. The thought in his mind was that if Audrey were worried there was something to be worried about. And, indisputably, he looked worried.

Now, anybody might, of course, have put whatever interpretation they chose on his concern. The inevitable one, however, would have annoyed him exceedingly. Yet the next afternoon when the telephone in his office buzzed, he knew at once who was speaking.

"Would you like to walk this afternoon?" she asked.

"Very much," said Roger—and that was absolutely the truth.



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"I'll meet you at the boat-house at four then. Is that convenient?"

"Perfectly!" Roger assured her.

Nevertheless as soon as she had hung up he directed his stenographer to tell one of his best clients that Mr. Dighton was very sorry, but that he would be unable to consult with him at four.

Once again, Kelly was in tweeds and he must approve of her, so far as appearance went, from the crown of the smart little sailor down to the sturdy tan walking shoes she wore. She looked sweet and wholesome, no longer Kelly of Charles Street, but Kelly of Virginia.

"Awfully good of you to come," she said, and smiled.

As they fell into step together, however, the smile vanished and he had a feeling that she was troubled. She said nothing for a minute or two and then, without preface, she broke the news.

"The family want me to come home," she announced.

On this Roger made no comment, but his eyes were expectant.

"Aren't you going to say something?" she challenged.

"I'm waiting to hear the rest of it first," he replied.

Kelly gave him a swift smile. "There are times when your penetration amazes me," she remarked. "As for the rest of it—they have cut off my allowance."

This *did* surprise Roger, and seeing its effect on Kelly—her lips had set firmly—he questioned its wisdom.

"What shall you do?" he asked.

"I'm not going home," she said, defiantly. "It makes me furious. I suppose some busybody wrote them—"

She broke off and for a time there was silence between them.

Then, feeling his way, he ventured, "You are dependent on the allowance?"

"Absolutely," she acknowledged. Reading his thought she added, "Oh, the tea-room was just a lark. It's been loads of fun, but it's never paid its way. Lots of them never have any money anyway. They drink gallons of tea and devour tons of French pastries and depart with a gesture that means charge it all up."

"Remolding the world to their hearts' desire does seem to leave them little time and energy for gainful occupation," he observed.

"They amuse me awfully," commented Kelly, and smiled again. "They are so vehement, the way they argue everything. Of course—some of them are pure frauds. But one or two are genuine, I think."

He wondered if she meant Nikolai. As if, again, she had read his thought, she added, "I think Nikolai may be. He has courage—"

"Courage?" Roger could not help that.

"Oh, I know you don't think so," she retorted, swiftly. "But it does require courage to preach what he does, to be persecuted by the police—"

"And protected by wealthy friends," interrupted Roger again.

This was hardly wise. Roger should have known better.

"You don't know him," retorted Kelly, pointedly.

"I don't want to," acknowledged Roger.

"That," said Kelly, "just proves you're narrow!"

To which Roger made no reply. They

marched along, thereafter, for almost five minutes without speaking. Then:

"I didn't come out to quarrel," remarked Kelly, "but for a bit of fresh air—and you!"

As they left the Embankment and came opposite the block in which he and so many other of Boston's most eligible bachelors live, she observed,

"That's where you live, isn't it?"

Plainly surprised that she should know, Roger said it was.

"Nikolai told me so," she explained. And, her irrepressible humor getting the better of her, added, "In confidence, I'll tell you something else he said. That was, that it would be one of the best places in Boston to set off a bomb. Knock down a lot of prospective pillars of society at one whack!"

"More likely the only victims would be the janitor, the milkman and two or three innocent passers-by," commented Roger.

Kelly laughed outright. "They—the bomb-throwers—do seem so silly that way, don't they? But I promise I'll warn you."

For this, with its implied intimacy with Nikolai's plans, Roger did not thank her—although he said he did.

They came once more to the foot of her stairs, and she gave him her hand.

"You were awfully sweet and I *do* thank you," she said, and there was no mockery in her voice then.

"I haven't swayed you in the least, though," he suggested.

She met his eyes and, strangely enough, seemed to hesitate.

"If I should tell you that I would go up-stairs and pack up and take the next train home and never come back would that please you?"

"Very much!" he said, earnestly.

The dusk hid her face, but her answer made him feel that she had deliberately led him on, that she might mock him.

"Sorry—but I can't. Anyway, Kelly of Charles Street is doomed—I can't possibly support us both. And that ought to make you happy—I know how you disapprove of it. Good-by!"

From half-way up the stairs she called back to him as he turned away:

"If you'll come to-night I'll give you all the French pastries and tea you can consume. Please come!"

Needless to say he had no intention of going. And equally needless to say, perhaps, he went, although it was after eleven when he entered Kelly's domain. He had come with no clear idea of what he intended to say or do. That, like many other difficult decisions waited upon the turn of circumstance. He had come, not because he wanted to—he was precise on that point—but because he was a Dighton and the Dightons never evaded a plainly indicated responsibility. He simply couldn't shrug Kelly from his shoulders. At eleven o'clock he so decided.

When he had finally arrived at Kelly's—so late that Kelly had made up her mind he wasn't coming—he found her standing on a chair. All eyes were fastened on her, only a few shifted to view the late arrival. Among these were Audrey's.

"Why," announced her husband, his glance following hers, "it's Roger!"

"Yes!" she breathed, so ecstatically

that he wondered. But before he could do more than that she added, "S-s-h-h! She's speaking!"

Every eye was on Kelly again. Never had Roger seen her so lovely as, eyes alight and her color deepened by the stimulation of the moment, she announced that at midnight Kelly's would close forever. With what he considered deplorable lack of reserve she had confided to all that motley crew just why it was closing.

"But I'm not going home anyway!" she had concluded defiantly.

They had cheered that, like the half-wits they were. But Roger had gone cold. She saw him at that instant, still standing by the door, and his eyes and hers had clashed across the long room. Then:

"And to-night everything is on the house," she added recklessly. "Eat, drink and be merry—for to-morrow Kelly of Charles Street dies."

Then, her dramatic announcement finished, she would have stepped down from her platform of sorts but Nikolai had reached forward and caught her in his arms and lifted her bodily to the floor. And she had smiled—smiled!

The italics, one may be sure, were Roger's.

Now the perversity of woman is so notorious that even the most learned of philosophers simply wave their hands expressively and remain silent as to what motive may lie behind this action or that. But Roger knew! He knew, beyond peradventure of a doubt, that Nikolai and his subtle, poisonous sophistry had prevailed. And so he had turned, and, hat still in hand, descended the stairs. It was still in his hand when the lights of passing motors brought him to a standstill and he realized that he had walked the length of the Embankment and was confronting Beacon Street.

Roger hesitated and then turned, retracing his steps. He came to the end of Harvard Bridge—the same bridge upon which the poet stood at midnight—and here he paused. And while he paused the clocks struck the hour. Midnight!

He had come, abruptly, to the realization that never, so long as he lived, would he be able to shrug Kelly from his shoulders. He might fight the knowledge but he could not escape it. He might question love such as this, fastening itself upon a man without warning and against his will, but love laughs at such cross-examination.

This far, however, Roger had not yet had time to go. He was still in the throes of his disorganizing discovery when he realized that somebody was coming along the Embankment. As he turned, the light of the neighboring arc-lamp fell upon the intruder's face. Nikolai!

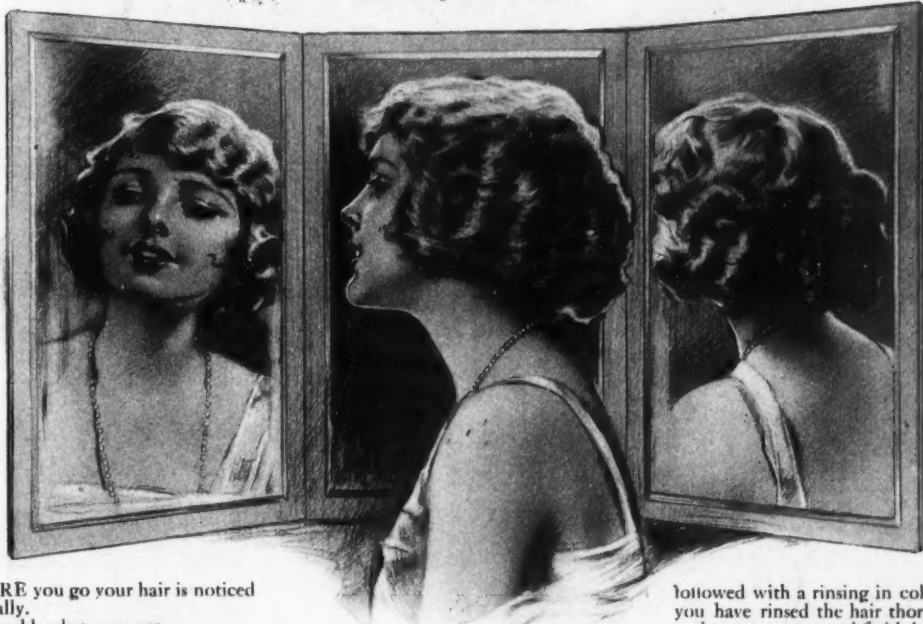
Now, Roger was a Dighton of Boston, the tenth of a line that traced its ancestry direct to the Pilgrims. In him certain inhibitions were inbred, environment and education had all served to perpetuate that habit of self-repression, that deeply seated distrust of any emotional outburst that had been so deeply ingrained in the characters of those who came over in the Mayflower! And so in him the lover, outraged in every fiber must yet be restrained, as became a Dighton and a Pilgrim descendant.

At least that was (Continued on page 121)

Cosmopolitan for August, 1921

Why You Must Have Beautiful Well-Kept Hair to be Attractive

Illustrated by WILL GREFE



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The R. L. W. Co.

EVERYWHERE you go your hair is noticed most critically.

It tells the world what you are. If you wear your hair becomingly and always have it beautifully clean and well-kept, it adds more than anything else to your attractiveness. Beautiful hair is not a matter of luck, it is simply a matter of care.

Study your hair, take a hand mirror and look at the front, the sides, and the back. Try doing it up in various ways. See just how it looks best.

A slight change in the way you dress your hair, or in the way you care for it, makes all the difference in the world in its appearance.

In caring for the hair, shampooing is always the most important thing.

It is the shampooing which brings out the real life and lustre, natural wave and color, and makes your hair soft, fresh and luxuriant.

When your hair is dry, dull and heavy, lifeless, stiff and gummy, and the strands cling together, and it feels harsh and disagreeable to the touch, it is because your hair has not been shampooed properly.

When your hair has been shampooed properly, and is thoroughly clean, it will be glossy, smooth and bright, delightfully fresh-looking, soft and silky.

While your hair must have frequent and regular washing to keep it beautiful, it cannot stand the harsh effect of ordinary soap. The free alkali in ordinary soaps soon dries the scalp, makes the hair brittle and ruins it.

That is why discriminating people use Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo. This clear, pure

and entirely greaseless product cannot possibly injure and it does not dry the scalp, or make the hair brittle, no matter how often you use it.

If you want to see how really beautiful you can make your hair look, just

Follow This Simple Method

FIRST, wet the hair and scalp in clear, warm water. Then apply a little Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo, rubbing it in thoroughly all over the scalp and throughout the entire length, down to the ends of the hair.

Rub the Lather in Thoroughly.

TWO or three teaspoonfuls will make an abundance of rich, creamy lather. This should be rubbed in thoroughly and briskly with the finger tips, so as to loosen the dandruff and small particles of dirt and dust that stick to the scalp.

When you have done this, rinse the hair and scalp thoroughly, using clear, fresh, warm water. Then use another application of Mulsified. You can easily tell when the hair is perfectly clean, for it will be soft and silky in the water.

Rinse the Hair Thoroughly

THIS is very important. After the final washing the hair and scalp should be rinsed in at least two changes of good warm water and

followed with a rinsing in cold water. When you have rinsed the hair thoroughly, wring it as dry as you can; and finish by rubbing it with a towel, shaking it and fluffing it until it is dry. Then, give it a good brushing.

After a Mulsified Shampoo you will find the hair will dry quickly and evenly and have the appearance of being much thicker and heavier than it is.

If you want to always be remembered for your beautiful, well-kept hair, make it a rule to set a certain day each week for a Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo.

This regular weekly shampooing will keep the scalp soft, and the hair fine and silky, bright, fresh-looking and fluffy, wavy and easy to manage, and it will be noticed and admired by everyone.

You can get Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo at any drug store or toilet goods counter. A 4-ounce bottle should last for months.

Splendid for children. Fine for men.



WATKINS
MULSIFIED
COCOANUT OIL SHAMPOO



Your Hair Should be Dressed so as to Emphasize Your Best Lines and Reduce Your Worst Ones

Begin by studying your profile. If you have a pug nose, do not put your hair on the top of your head; if you have a round, fat face, do not fluff your hair out too much at the sides; if your face is very thin and long, then you should fluff your hair out at the sides. The woman with the full face and double chin should wear her hair high. All these and other individual features must be taken into consideration in selecting the proper hairdress. Above all, simplicity should prevail. You are always most attractive when your hair looks most natural, when it looks most like you.

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page 121)



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Through the Ages
with Father Time—

CLOCKMAKERS' COMPANY RAID



JOHN ARNOLD, in 1796, was "called to the livery" of one of history's most amazing monopolies—the Clockmakers' Company of London. For a century this guild bore royal authority to search incoming vessels for "deceitful watches"—and to destroy them on the spot!

Arnold was one of the greatest of the guild's craftsmen. Despite these high-handed methods, he and his comrades advanced enormously the art of timekeeping.

His earliest triumph was a tiny repeating watch made for George III. The entire movement measured one-third of an inch across. The Empress of Russia offered him a thousand guineas for a duplicate of it, but Arnold was not tempted. "Let it remain unique," he said.

He little dreamed that the young republic a thousand leagues to the westward would yet outshine his proudest masterpieces with those timekeeping marvels of our day—

Elgin Watches

To the Children—

Captain Tick is back! His fifth picture book, "Adventures in Search of Father Time," is now ready. Ask your jeweler for your FREE copy of this beautiful new book.



the ideal toward which he instinctively strove even though primitive impulses, bred of a jealousy he would have scorned to recognize, ran riot through him.

Nikolai realized that a tempest of sorts was brewing. But from the first, he, with professional contempt for all Roger stood for, had mistaken his man. Now, recently balked himself, and still furious, his lips twisted in an ugly sneer.

"Bah!" he said, and snapped contemptuous fingers under Roger's nose.

Ever after Roger was to feel a secret shamed sympathy with men he saw in the prisoner's dock, charged with crimes of passion. For he, at that instant, literally saw red and was to know forever that it was more than a phrase.

The Russian bulked big, but he was no wrestler. He struggled briefly against the deadliest of holds and then squealed with pain. The terror in his eyes would have sobered Roger at any other moment but now he was relentless. He lifted Nikolai bodily and threw him into the river. As quickly as that it was over. A little breathless but filled with that swelling exultation that only the unleashing of the most primitive of passions can create, he watched the river's dark bosom until Nikolai floundered to the surface again.

Then an appalling discovery chilled and sobered him. Nikolai could not swim! Roger vaulted the guard rail and the river rippled to his plunge. The Russian's panic, the slippery stone foundations of the Embankment and the guard rail over which he must be lifted, nearly drowned them both, but Roger finally managed to land his man. He was far the more exhausted of the two and Nikolai was the first to speak.

"I'll see," he said, "that you suffer for this."

Roger smiled wearily. "If you can stand the publicity, I can," he assured him—and realized that he had scored. "In the meantime I advise you to get home as quickly as possible and change your clothes."

The chill with which he himself shook, as he went up to his apartment, was not from exposure—the fast mile he had covered would have remedied that—but from pure reaction. The dusky elevator boy had been asleep, his mouth wide open, and Roger had not disturbed his slumbers. He fitted his key into the lock and turned it. The door swung open, flooding him with unexpected light.

"It's me!" said Kelly. "Don't be startled!"

Rather, should she have said "utterly dumfounded." Roger simply stared.

"Didn't the elevator boy tell you I was here?" she asked swiftly. "I told him I was your—your sister and said I would wait."

"I walked up—he was asleep," said Roger, still staring.

"Please shut the door—and don't look at me so," said Kelly. "I know it's never done except in stories and on the stage, but I had to go somewhere and so I came here. I was frightened—"

Her voice broke and he realized then that she was under high tension. The discovery pulled him together instantly. He closed the door.

"What frightened you?" he asked, almost as if she were a child.

Kelly's lip quivered. "Nikolai," she said. "Is—did you see him outside anywhere?"

Roger evaded that. "What did he do?"

She was a long time replying. Then: "He wouldn't go, when the others did," she said, slowly. "I was furious—but he only laughed. And then—then—"

The flood she had been fighting against came then, a veritable deluge that drowned out her lovely voice. Just when—or why—Roger took her in his arms he did not know, but there she was, her head, with the smart sailor sadly awry, against his damp shoulder. But she didn't notice its dampness.

"He—he said he was no American fool to let a girl play with him—and get away with it," she sobbed. "And that I'd led him on. I saw that he meant it, I pretended to laugh and I got my hat and—and—"

He felt the shiver that ran through her. "There was no policeman on the street and I ran. He followed me and I—I came in here. And—and you weren't here!"

The flood renewed itself, as if the memory of his absence was too much for her. Indeed, Roger felt culpable somehow. "There, there," he soothed, holding her very close.

Evidently she was content to be so held and presently she became more calm.

"You're here now, anyway," she said. "And you aren't going to scold or blame me, are you? It was your fault anyway. I wanted to horrify you."

"Me? I don't see why," protested Roger.

"You wouldn't," she said cryptically. "Are you glad I came? Because if you aren't—" she made a movement as if to free herself, but he held her close.

"I'm glad, too," she said, and relaxed in his arms. "Although I hadn't the slightest intention of letting myself fall in love with you," she broke off short as

her cheek touched his coat. "You're soaking wet—is it raining?"

"Why—I don't know," said Roger.

"You must change—at once!"

The proprieties, so long forgotten, recalled themselves to him.

"Not until I've attended to you. I'll take you to Audrey's—"

"No!" Kelly shook her head decisively.

She had reason for preferring not to let Audrey know just then how their plan for the harrying of Roger had worked—although Audrey herself had no doubt on that point.

"I'll bet you," Audrey was informing her husband, "a half dozen pairs of gloves against a box of your own brand of cigars that they'll marry. They're crazy about each other, although they may not know it yet."

"I don't see," he began.

"Men never do," she retorted, scornfully. "But I have eyes." She stopped short as a thought disturbed her. "Although somehow I can't imagine Kelly ever doing anything so conventional as an ordinary wedding, with bridesmaids and ushers and all that—"

Nor, for that matter, could Kelly. She eyed Roger defiantly, while her color came and went.

"You don't mean to go to Connecticut—now, to-night?" he asked incredulously.

She nodded. "And then," she went on breathlessly, "I'll take you home to show the family that I'm—under new management."

The doubt that instinctively beset him as to the wisdom of such a headlong course she read in his eyes.

"Do you want to marry me—or don't you?" she demanded instantly. "Because if you do you're to kiss me and run along and change and do as I say."

He kissed her, and the rest of her program followed as morning follows night. As they drove on and on with his headlights cutting great swaths of light in the brooding dark, she, enveloped in one of his great coats, snuggled against his shoulder and was silent for so long that he wondered whether she was asleep. But even as he wondered, she smiled up at him.

"I suspect," she said, "that several of your ancestors must be turning over in their graves but *that*—he felt her cheek settle against his sleeve—"is what you get for loving me!" Her eyes met his again. "Isn't it funny you should?"

To which he made the inevitable answer which, as it happened, was also the right one. It wasn't the least bit funny—Nature, like Audrey, being an insatiable experimenter.

Alias the Lone Wolf

(Continued from page 54)

"And did they go?" Monk asked. "Presently, some of them; ultimately all. Some lingered a few years in French prisons, like that great Popinot, father of the *monsieur* who has caused us so much trouble."

"Well," Phinuit hazarded with a good show of confidence, "I guess you won't tell us to go plumb to hell, will you?"

"No; I can promise to be more original than that."

"Then you refuse!" Liane breathed tensely.

"Oh, I haven't said that! You must give me time to think this over."

"I knew that would be his answer," Monk proclaimed, pride in his perspicuity shaping the set of his eyebrows. "That is why I was firm that we should wait no longer. You have four days in which to make up your mind, *monsieur*."

"I shall need them."

"I don't see why," Phinuit argued; "it's an open and shut proposition."

"But you are asking me to renounce

something upon which I have set much store for many years, *monsieur*. I can't be expected to do that in an hour or even a day. You shall have your answer when we make our landfall—or before."

XXV

THE MALCONTENT

FROM the hour when Liane Delorme, Phinuit and Captain Monk, in conclave

solemnly assembled at the instance of the one last-named, communicated their collective mind in respect of his interesting self, Lanyard was conscious of implicit confidence in a happy outcome of the business, with a consciousness less rational than simply felt, a sort of bubbling exhilaration in his mood that found its most intelligible expression in the phrase, which he was wont often to iterate to himself: *Cà va bien*—that goes well!

That—the progressive involution of that insane imbroglia—went very well indeed, in Lanyard's reckoning; he could hardly wish, he could not reasonably demand that it should go better.

He knew now with what design Liane Delorme had made him a party to this sea adventure and intimate with every detail of the conspiracy; and he knew to boot why she had offered him the free gift of her love. Doubt as to the one, scruples inspired by the other—that reluctance which man cannot but feel to do a hurt to a heart that holds him dear, however scanty his response to its passion—could no longer influence him to palter in dealing with the woman. The revelation had, in effect, stricken shackles from Lanyard's wrists; now when he struck it would be with neither hesitation nor compunction.

As to that stroke alone, its hour and place and fashion, he remained without decision. He had made a hundred plans for its delivery, and one of them, that seemed the wildest, he thought of seriously, as something really feasible. But single-handed! That made it difficult. If only one could devise some way to be in two places at one time and the same! An impossibility? He wouldn't deny that. But Lanyard had never been one to be discouraged by the grim, hard face of an impossibility. He had known too many such to dissipate utterly, vanish into empty air, when subjected to a bold and resolute assault. He wouldn't say die.

Winds blew and fell, the sea rose and subsided, the *Sybarite* trudged on into dull weather. The sky grew overcast, and Lanyard, daily scanning the very heavens for a sign, accented this for one, and prayed it might hold. Nothing could be more calculated to nullify his set design than to have the landfall happen on a clear, calm night of stars.

He went to bed, the last night out, leaving a noisy gathering in the saloon, and read himself drowsy. Then turning out his light he slept. Sometime later he found himself instantaneously awake and alert, with a clear head and every faculty on the *qui vive*—much as a man might grope for a time in a dark strange room, then find a door and step out into broad daylight.

Only there was no light now other than in the luminous clarity of his mind. Even the illumination in the saloon had been dimmed down for the night, as he could tell by the tarnished line of gold that showed beneath his stateroom door.

Still, not every one had gone to bed. The very manner of his waking informed him that he was not alone in the darkness of his stateroom, for the life Lanyard had led had taught him to need no better alarm than the entrance of another person into the place where he lay sleeping. All animals are like that, whose lives hang on their vigilance.

Able to see nothing, he none the less

felt a presence, and knew that it waited, stirless, within arm's-length of his head. Without much concern, he thought of Popinot, that "phantom Popinot" of Monk's derisive naming.

Well, if the vision Liane had seen on deck had taken material form here in his stateroom, Lanyard presumed it meant another fight, and the last, to a death.

Without making a sound, he gathered himself together, ready for a spring out of bed, and as noiselessly lifted a hand toward the switch for the electric light, set in the wall near the head of the bed. But in the same breath he heard a whisper, or rather a mutter, a voice he could not place in its present pitch.

"Awake, Monsieur Delorme?" it said. "Hush! Don't make a row, and never mind the light."

His astonishment was so overpowering that instinctively his tensed muscles relaxed and his hand fell back upon the bedding.

"Who the deuce—?"

"Not so loud. It's me—Mussey."

Lanyard echoed witlessly, "Mussey?"

"Yes. I don't wonder you're surprised, but if you'll be easy you'll understand pretty soon why I had to have a bit of a talk with you without anybody's catching on."

"Well," Lanyard said, "I'm damned."

"I say!" The subdued mutter took on a note of anxiety. "It's all right, isn't it? I mean, you aren't going to kick up a rumpus and spill the beans? I guess you must think I've got a gall, coming in on you like this, and I don't know as I blame you, but . . . Well, time's getting short, only two more days at sea, and I couldn't wait longer for a chance to have a few minutes' chin with you."

The mutter ceased and held an expectant pause. Lanyard said nothing. But he was conscious that the speaker occupied a chair by the bed, and knew that he was bending near to catch his answer, for the air was tainted with vinous breath. Yes: one required no stronger identification than that; it was beyond any doubt the chief engineer of the *Sybarite*.

"I believe," said Lanyard pointedly, "you stipulated for a few minutes' chin with me. Time passes, Mr. Mussey. Get to your business, or let me go to sleep again."

"Sharp, you are," commented the mutter. "I've noticed it in you. You'd be surprised if you knew how much notice I've been taking of you."

"And flattered, I'm sure."

"Look here . . ." The mutter stumbled. "I want to ask a very personal question. Daresay you'll think it impertinent."

"If I do, be sure I sha'n't answer it."

"Well . . . it's this: Is or isn't your right name Lanyard, Michael Lanyard?"

This time it was Lanyard who, thinking rapidly, held the pause so long that his querist's uneasiness could not contain itself.

"Is that my answer? I mean, does your silence—?"

"That's an unusual name, Michael Lanyard," cautiously replied its proprietor. "How did you get hold of it?"

"They say it's the right name of the Lone Wolf. Guess I don't have to tell you who the Lone Wolf is."

"They say? Who, please, are 'they'?"

"Oh, there's a lot of talk going around the ship. You know how it is; a crew will gossip. And, God knows, they've got enough excuse this cruise."

"And what, Mr. Mussey, if I should admit I am Michael Lanyard?"

"Then I'll have something to say to you, something I think'll interest you."

"Why not run the risk of interesting me, whoever I may be?"

Mussey breathed heavily in the stillness: the breathing of a cautious man loath to commit himself.

"I suppose the best way's to put it to you straight . . ."

"I warn you, you'll gain nothing if you don't."

"Then . . . to begin at the beginning . . . I've known Whit Monk a good long time. Years I've known him. We've sailed together off and on ever since him and I took to the sea; we've gone through some nasty scrapes together, and done things that don't bear telling, and always shared the thick and the thin of everything. Before this, if anybody had ever told me Whit Monk would do a pal dirt, I'd've punched his head and thought no more about it. But now . . ."

The mutter faltered. Lanyard preserved a sympathetic silence—a silence, at least, which he hoped would pass as sympathetic. In reality, he was struggling to suppress any betrayal of an exultation that was beginning to take hold of him. Premature this might prove to be, but it seemed impossible to misunderstand the emotion under which the chief engineer was laboring or to underestimate its potential value to Lanyard. Surely it would seem that his faith in his star had been well placed: was it not now—or all signs failed—delivering into his hand the forged tool he had so desperately needed, for which he had so earnestly prayed?

A heavy sigh issued upon the stillness, freighted with a deep and desolating melancholy. For, it appeared, like all cynics, Mr. Mussey was a sentimentalist at heart. And in the darkness that disembodied voice took up its tale anew.

"I don't have to tell you what's going on between Whit and that lot he's so thick with nowadays. You know, or you wouldn't be here."

"Isn't that conclusion what you Americans would call a little previous?"

"Previous?" The mutter took a moment to con the full significance of that adjective. "No: I wouldn't call it that. You see, on a voyage like this—well, talk goes on, things get about, things are said aloud that shouldn't be and get overheard and passed along; and the man who sits back and listens and sifts what he hears is pretty likely to get a tolerably good line on what's what. Of course there's never been any secret about what the owner means to do with all this wine he's shipped. We all know we're playing a risky game, but we're for the owner—he isn't a bad sort, when you get to know him—and we'll go through with it and take what's coming to us, win or lose. Partly, of course, because it'll mean something handsome for every man if we make it without getting caught. But if you want to know what I think . . . I'll tell you something . . ."

"I am all attention."

"I think Monk and Phinuit and *mam'selle* have framed the owner between them."

About the famous

\$5000⁰⁰

prize contest

ANSWERS from every quarter of the globe are coming in to the Contest Editor, giving varied and interesting solutions to the question, "How might the Montalais jewels be recovered?"

For the benefit of those unfamiliar with the terms of the competition this page is printed.

Read the rules carefully.

Turn to page 48 of this issue of Cosmopolitan. There you will find the fifth installment of "Alias the Lone

Wolf," a novel by Louis Joseph Vance, preceded by a clear synopsis of previous chapters. This synopsis, together with the installment in this issue, will tell you all you need to know of the plot of the story in order to set your mind working on a solution of your own as to how the Lone Wolf might recover the Montalais jewels.

Remember your answer or answers (you may send in as many as you like) must be mailed before midnight of August 12th, 1921.

Your solution is not to be the same as Mr. Vance's. This is not a guessing contest for the "lucky." It's a real test of cleverness in which distinguished judges will decide the winners.

You've often wanted to put your originality to a real test. You've often thought you could solve a mystery story better than the author. Here's an opportunity. Ideas are here worth something.

The requirements of this contest are easy to fulfill

1. Write *five hundred words or less* giving your version of how the Montalais jewels might be recovered.
2. You may mail your solution (or as many solutions as you desire) any time between now and midnight of August 12, 1921. Solutions postmarked after that time will not be considered.
3. This contest is open to you whether you are a subscriber to Cosmopolitan or not. It is not necessary that you buy the magazine in order to enter the contest.
4. Employees, or members of the families of employees of the International Magazine Company or of the organizations of which this company is a part, are barred from this contest.
5. Checks will be mailed to the winners as soon as the judges have arrived at their decisions.
6. The names of the winners will appear in the November issue of Cosmopolitan, which will be published in October.
7. No manuscripts will be returned and we cannot undertake to answer any questions.

The solution that, in the opinion of the judges named below, most nearly fulfills the above conditions will receive the capital prize of \$2,000. The next best solution in merit in the opinion of the judges will be awarded \$1,000. The third contestant in point of merit will receive \$500. The next prize will be \$250. The next twenty-five prizes will be \$50 each, making 29 prizes in all.

The Judges are:

Wm. J. Burns, famous international detective and head of The William J. Burns International Detective Agency, Inc.

Francis H. Sisson, Vice-President of the Guaranty Trust Company of New York.

Ray Long, Editorial Vice-

President of the International Magazine Company.

Fannie Hurst, author of "Star Dust," "Humoresque," "Guilty," and other stories.

J. Mitchel Thorsen, Business Manager of Cosmopolitan Magazine.

Louis Joseph Vance, author of "Alias, the Lone Wolf" and other novels.

Contest Editor, Cosmopolitan Magazine, Room 100, 119 West 40th St., N.Y.

"Can't say I quite follow . . ."

"I think they cooked up this smuggling business and kidded him into it just to get the use of his yacht for their own purposes and at the same time get him where he can't put up a howl if he finds out the truth. Suppose he does . . ." The mutter became momentarily a deep-throated chuckle of malice. "He's in so deep on the booze smuggling side he dassen't say a word, and that puts him in worse yet, it makes him accessory before the fact of criminal practises that'd make his hair stand on end. Then, suppose they want to go on with the game, looting in Europe and sneaking the goods into America with the use of his yacht: what's he going to say, how's he going to stop them?"

Accepting these questions as purely rhetorical, Lanyard offered no comment. After a moment the mutter resumed:

"Well, what do you think? Am I right or am I wrong?"

"But why should you talk about it to me, *monsieur*?"

"Why, because I and you are both in the same boat, in a manner of speaking. We're both on the outside—shut out—looking in."

Perceiving he would get no more satisfaction, Lanyard schooled himself to be politic for the time being.

"Say it is so, then . . . But I think you have something to propose."

"It's simple enough: When two people find themselves in the same boat they've got to pull together if they want to get anywhere."

"You propose, then, an alliance?"

"That's the answer. Without you I can't do anything but kick over the appletart for Whit Monk; and that sort of revenge is mighty unsatisfactory. Without me—well, what can you do? I know you can get that tin safe of Whit's open, when you feel like it, get the jewels and all; but what show do you stand to get away with them? That is, unless you've got somebody working with you on board the ship. See here . . ."

The mutter sank into a husky whisper, and in order to be heard the speaker bent so low over Lanyard that fumes of whisky almost suffocated the poor man in his bed.

"You've got a head, you've had experience, you know how . . . Well, go to it; make your plans, consult with me, get everything fixed, lift the loot; I'll stand by, fix up everything so's your work will go through slick, see that you don't get hurt, stow the jewels where they won't be found; and when it's all over, we'll split fifty-fifty. What d'you say?"

"Extremely ingenious, *monsieur*, but unfortunately impracticable."

"That's the last thing," stated the disappointed whisper, "I ever thought a man like you would say."

"But it is obvious. We do not know each other."

"You mean, you can't trust me?"

"For that matter: how can you be sure you can trust me?"

"Oh, I guess I can size up a square man when I see him."

"Many thanks. But why should I trust you, when you will not even be quite frank with me?"

"How's that? Haven't I—"

"One moment; you refuse to name the source of your astonishingly detailed information concerning this affair—myself

included. You wish me to believe you simply assume I am at odds with Captain Monk and his friends. I admit it is true. But how should you know it? Ah, no, my friend! Either you will tell me how you learned this secret, or I must beg you to let me get my sleep."

"That's easy. I heard Whit and Phinuit talking about you the other night, on deck, when they didn't think anybody was listening."

Lanyard smiled into the darkness; no need to fret about fair play toward this one! The truth was not in him, and by the same token the traditional honor that obtains among thieves could not be.

He said, as if content, in the manner of a practical man dismissing all immaterial considerations:

"As you say, the time is brief . . ."

"It'll have to be pulled off to-morrow night or not at all," the mutter urged with an eager accent.

"My thought, precisely. For then we come to land, do we not?"

"Yes, and it'll have to be not long after dark. We ought to drop the hook at midnight. Then"—the mutter was broken with hopeful anxiety—"then you've decided you'll stand in with me, Mr. Lanyard?"

"But of course! What else can one do? As you have so fairly pointed out: What is either of us without the other?"

"And it's understood; you're to lift the stuff, I'm to take care of it till we can slip ashore, we're to make our getaway together—and the split's to be fifty-fifty, fair and square?"

"I ask nothing more fair."

"Where's your hand?"

Two hands found each other blindly and exchanged a firm and inspiring clasp—while Lanyard gave thanks for the night that saved his face from betraying his mind.

Another deep sigh sounded a note of apprehensions at an end. A gruff chuckle followed.

"Whit Monk! He'll learn something about the way to treat old friends."

But Lanyard had been listening only with his ears; he hadn't the slightest interest in Mr. Mussey's resentment of the affectations of Captain Monk. Now his mad scheme had suddenly assumed a complexion of comparative simplicity; with the cooperation of the chief engineer (whether or not Lanyard's suspicions did him justice) all Lanyard need contribute would be a little headwork, a little physical exertion, a little daring—and complete indifference, which was both well warranted and already his, to abusing the confidence of Mr. Mussey.

"But about this affair to-morrow night," he interrupted impatiently: "attend to me a little, if you please, my friend. Can you give me any idea where we are, or were, approximately, at midnight to-night?"

"What's that got to do—?"

"Perhaps I ask only for my own information. But it may be that I have a plan. If we are to work together harmoniously, Mr. Mussey, you must learn to have a little confidence in me."

"Beg your pardon," said an humble mutter. "We ought to be somewhere off Nantucket Shoals Lightship."

"And the weather; have you sufficient acquaintance with these latitudes to foretell it—even roughly?"

"Born and brought up in Edgartown, made my first voyage on a tramp out of New Bedford; guess I ought to know something of the weather in these latitudes! The wind's been hauling round from southwest to south all day. If it swings on to southeast, it'll likely be thick to-morrow, with little wind, no sea to speak of, and either rain or fog."

"So! Now to do what I will have to do, I must have ten minutes of absolute darkness. Can that be arranged?"

"Absolute darkness?" The mutter had a rising inflection of dubiety. "How d'you mean?"

"Complete extinguishing of every light on the ship."

"My God!" the mutter protested. "Do you know what that means? No lights at night, under way, in main-traveled waters! Why, by nightfall we ought to be off Block Island, in traffic as heavy as on Fifth Avenue! No; that's too much."

"Too bad," Lanyard uttered, philosophic. "And the thing could have been done!"

"Isn't there some other way?"

"Not with lights to hamper my operations. But if some temporary accident were to put the dynamos out of commission—figure to yourself what would happen."

"There'd be hell to pay."

"Ah! but what else?"

"The engines would have to be slowed down so as to give no more than steerage way until oil-lamps could be substituted for the binnacle, masthead, and side lights, also for the engine room."

"And there would be excitement and confusion, eh? Everybody would make for the deck, even the captain would leave his cabin unguarded long enough . . ."

"I get you"—with a sigh. "It's wrong, all wrong, but—well, I suppose it'll have to be done."

Lanyard treated himself to a smile of triumph, there in the darkness.

XXVI

THE BINNACLE

It would have been ungrateful (Lanyard reflected over his breakfast) to complain of a life so replete with experiences of piquant contrast.

It happened to one to lie for hours in a cubicle of blinding night, harkening to a voice like that of some nightmare strangely become articulate, a ghostly mutter that rose and fell and droned, broken by sighs, grunts, stifled oaths, so completely incarnate and divorced from all relationship to any mortal personality that even that reek of whisky in the air, even that one contact with a hard, hot hand, could not make it seem real.

And then it ceased and was no more but as a thing of dream that had passed. And one came awake to a light and wholesome world furnished with such solidly comforting facts as soaps and razors and hot and cold salt-water taps; and subsequently one left one's stateroom to see, at the breakfast-table, leaden-eyed and flushed of countenance, an amorphous lump of humid flesh in shapeless garments of soiled white duck, the author of that mutter in the dark; who, lounging over a plate of broken food and lifting a coffee-cup in the tremulous hand of an alcoholic, looked up with

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A famous tire—a famous tread. Acknowledged among motorists and dealers alike as the world's foremost example of Cord tire building. Always delivering the same repeated economy, tire after tire, and season after season. The stripe around the side-walls is registered as a trade-mark in the U. S. Patent Office.



With every tire priced at true worth, what need would there be for "discounts"

BUSINESS concerns may be divided roughly into two classes.

One goes on the idea that the public doesn't think much. The other believes that public good sense makes the right decision nine times out of ten.

Concern No. 1 likes to keep away from facts. Concern No. 2 is anxious to place all the facts possible before people.

It is interesting to watch these conflicting methods working out in the tire industry.

* * *

Eighteen months ago the makers of U. S. Royal Cord Tires put themselves on rec-

ord against the unsoundness of the "discount" way of selling tires.

Going right ahead and making the *par quality tire* at a *net price*.

Opposing the confusion of "so much off list." Because list prices don't mean anything until the *real worth* of the tire itself is proven. Because "discounts" mean *still less* when list price has no relation to *value*.

Now it is evident the pub-

lic hasn't been backward in finding out the truth.

* * *

Rising above all the uncertainty of "discount" appeal comes the clear, sharp public opinion in favor of U. S. Royal Cords.

More dealers by 36% than a year ago. In May 1921 alone an increase in sales of U. S. Royal Cords of more than 25% over May 1920.

Car owners know more than they let on.

They are letting the "discount" situation run its course.

And turning to U. S. Royal Cords as the *par quality tire* at a *net price*.

The most significant thing that is happening in tires today.

As people say
everywhere

**United States Tires
are Good Tires**

United States Tires

United States Rubber Company

Fifty-three
Factories

The Oldest and Largest
Rubber Organization in the World

Two hundred and
thirty-five Branches

lack-lustre gaze, gave a surly nod, and mumbled the customary matutinal greeting:

"Morning, Monseer Delorme."

It was all too weird . . .

To add to this, the chief engineer paid Lanyard no further heed at all, although they were alone at table; and having noisily consumed his coffee, rubbed his stubbled lips and chin with an egg-stained napkin, rose, and without a word or glance rolled heavily up the companionway.

The conduct of a careful man, accustomed to mind his eye. And indisputably correct. One never knew who might be watching, what slightest sign of secret understanding might not be seized upon and read. Furthermore, Mr. Mussey had not stilled his mutter in the night until their joint and individual lines of action had been elaborately mapped out and agreed upon down to the smallest detail. It now remained only for Lanyard to fill in, somehow, the waste time that lay between breakfast and the hour appointed, and then take due advantage of the opportunity promised him.

He found the day making good Mr. Mussey's forecast. Under a dull, thick sky the sea ran in heavy swells, greasy and gray. The wind was in the south, and light and shifty. The horizon was vague. Captain Monk, encountered on the quarterdeck, had an uneasy eye, and cursed the weather roundly when Lanyard made civil inquiry as to the outlook. *Ca va bien!*

Lanyard killed an hour or two in the chart-room, acquainting himself with the coast they were approaching and tracing the *Sybarite's* probable course toward the spot selected from the smuggling transaction. His notion of the precise location of the owner's estate was rather indefinite; he had gathered from gossip that it was on the Connecticut shore of Long Island Sound, between New London and New Haven, where a group of small islands—also the property of Whitaker Monk—provided fair anchorage between Sound and shore as well as a good screen from offshore observation.

It was not vital to know more: Lanyard had neither hope nor fear of ever seeing that harbor. It was the approach alone that interested him, and when he had puzzled out that there were only two practicable courses for the *Sybarite* to take—both bearing in a general northwesterly direction from Nantucket Shoals Light Vessel, one entering Block Island Sound from the east, between Point Judith and Block Island, the other entering the same body of water from the south, between Block Island and Montauk Point—and had satisfied himself that manifold perils to navigation hedged about both courses, and more especially their prolongation into Long Island Sound by the way of the The Race, Lanyard told himself it would be strange indeed if his plans miscarried . . . always providing that Mr. Mussey could be trusted to hold to his overnight agreement.

The weather thickened as the day grew older. Towards noon the wind, as if weary and discouraged with vain endeavor to make up its mind to blow from this quarter or that, died away altogether.

After an hour of this Captain Monk, on the bridge with Mr. Swain, arrived at a decision of exasperation. Through the engine-room ventilators a long jingle of

the telegraph was heard; directly the *Sybarite's* pulses began to beat in quicker tempo, while darker volumes of smoke rolled in dense volume from her funnel and streamed away astern, resting low and preserving their individuality as long as visible—like a streak of oxidization on a field of frosted silver. For the first time since she had left the harbor of Cherbourg the yacht was doing herself something like justice in the question of speed—and this contrary to all ethics of seamanship, on such a day.

At the luncheon table, Phinuit ventured a light-headed comment on this dangerous procedure; whereupon Monk turned on him in a cold fury.

"As long as I'm master of this vessel, sir, I'll sail her according to the counsels of my own discretion—and thank you to keep your animadversions to yourself!"

"Animadversions!" Phinuit echoed, and made round, shocked eyes. "Oh! I never! At least, I didn't mean anything wicked, skipper dear."

Monk snorted, and grumbled over his food throughout the remainder of the meal; but later, coming upon a group composed of Liane Delorme, Lanyard and Phinuit, in the saloon, he paused, looked this way and that to make sure none of the stewards was within eavesdropping distance, and graciously unbent a little.

"I'm making the best time we can while we can see at all," he volunteered. "No telling when the misbegotten fog will close in and force us to slow down to half-speed or less—in crowded waters, too!"

"And very sensible, I'm sure," Phinuit agreed heartily. "Whatever happens, we mustn't be late for our date with Friend Boss, must we?"

"We'll keep it," Monk promised grimly, "if we have to feel every inch of our way in with the lead. I don't mind telling you, this fog may save our skins at that. I know these waters like a book. I've sailed them ever since I was old enough to tell a tiller from a mainsheet. I can smell my way in, if it comes to that, through the blindest fog the Atlantic ever brewed!"

"Then you do things with your nostrils, too?" Phinuit inquired innocently. "I've often wondered if all the intellect was located in the eyebrows."

Monk glared, growled, and hastily sought the air of the deck. Liane Delorme eyed Phinuit with amused reproach.

"Really, my young friend!"

"I can't help it, *mademoiselle*," Phinuit asserted sulkily. "Somebody's got to be comic relief, and I don't notice anybody else in a sweat to be the Life and Soul of the ship."

He favored Lanyard with a morose stare. "Why don't you ever put your shoulder to the wheel, Lanyard? Why leave it all to me? Come on; be a sport: cut a caper, crack a wheeze—do something to get a giggle!"

"But I am by no means sure you do not laugh at me too much, as it is."

"Rot! . . . Tell you what." Phinuit sat up with a gleaming eye of inspiration. "You can entertain *mademoiselle* and me no end, if you like. Spill the glad tidings."

"Glad tidings?"

"Now don't monkey with the eyebrows—*please!* It gives me the willies . . . I merely mean to point out, today's the day you promised to come through with the

Cosmopolitan for August, 1921

great decision. And there's no use waiting for Monk to join us; he's too much worried about his pretty little ship. Tell *mademoiselle* and me now."

Lanyard shook his head, smiling. "My answer will be communicated when we see land or at eleven o'clock tonight, whichever is the earlier event."

Some further effort at either persuasion or impudence—nobody but Phinuit ever knew which—was drowned out by the first heart-broken bellow of the whistle sounding the fog signal.

Liane Delorme bounded out of her chair, clapping hands to ears, and uttered an unheard cry of protest; and when, the noise suspending temporarily, she learned that it was to be repeated at intervals of two minutes as long as the fog lasted and the yacht was under way, she flung up piteous hands to an uncompassionate heaven and fled to her stateroom.

Rather than languish under the burden of Mr. Phinuit's spirited conversation for the rest of the afternoon, Lanyard imitated Liane's example, and wasted the next hour and a half flat on his bed, with eyes closed but his mind very much alive. Now and again he consulted his watch, as one might with an important appointment to keep. At two minutes to four he left his stateroom, and as the first stroke of eight bells rang out—in one of the measured intervals between blasts of the whistle—ending the afternoon watch, he stepped out on deck, and paused for a survey of the weather conditions.

There was no perceptible motion in the air, witnessing that the wind had come in from astern, that is to say approximately from the southeast, and was blowing at about the speed being made by the yacht itself. The fog clung about the vessel, Lanyard thought, like dull grey cotton wool. Yet, if the shuddering of her fabric were fair criterion, the pace of the *Sybarite* was unabated, she was ploughing through that dense obscurity headlong, using the utmost power to be exacted from her engines. From time to time, when the whistle was still, could be heard the calls of seamen operating the sounding machines; but their reports were monotonously uniform; the waters were not yet shoal enough for the lead to find bottom, at that pace.

The watch was being changed as Lanyard started forward, with the tail of his eye on the bridge. Mr. Collison relieved Mr. Swain, and the latter came down the companion-ladder to the deck just in time to save Lanyard a nasty spill as his feet slipped on planking greasy with globules of fog. There's no telling how bad a fall he might not have suffered had not Mr. Swain been there for him to catch at, and for a moment or two Lanyard was, as Mr. Swain put it with great good nature, all over him, clinging to the first officer in a most demonstrative manner, and it was with some difficulty that he at length recovered his equilibrium. Then, however, he laid hold of the rail for insurance against further mishaps, thanked Mr. Swain heartily, added his apologies, and the two parted with civil expressions of mutual esteem.

The incident seemed to have dampened Lanyard's ardor for exercise. He made a rather gingerly way back to the quarterdeck, loafed restlessly in a deck-chair for a little while, then went below once more.

Sometime after, supine again upon his

Follow these directions

Comb your hair over your face, freeing it from tangles. Wet thoroughly, for the wetter your hair the more profuse the lather.

Dip your fingers into the shampoo (previously poured into a cup or glass) and massage it into the scalp. You will find a profuse, fragrant lather follows your fingers, which soon envelops your head like a cap.

This lather penetrates roots and hair cells, dislodging dandruff and dissolving dirt and oil accumulations.

Wash the length in this thick lather and then begin rinsing. This is easy, as water dissolves Palmolive Shampoo instantly without any danger of leaving soap traces. Use two or three waters, or, far better, use a bath spray. Let the final rinsing be cold.

Two lathers are required—the trial bottle contains ample quantity. Then dry by fanning and shaking.

Brush thoroughly (with a clean brush) and then examine the quality of your hair.

Its softness, its silky abundance, its shiny, attractive gloss, will delight you.



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It gives the all-desired gloss and a beautiful,

silky quality. It keeps your hair soft and makes it seem abundant.

This olive oil is blended with palm oil, another oriental oil of beneficial action, and coconut oil is added for the sake of its lathering qualities.

Send for trial-size bottle

It is sent absolutely free, accompanied by a booklet which explains home treatment of the hair and scalp to help make it grow thick and beautiful.

Acquaintance bottle and book together introduce you to the secret of glorious, glossy hair, beautiful with health and the well-groomed look women envy and men admire.

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bed, he heard Mr. Swain in the saloon querulously interrogating one of the stewards. It appeared that Mr. Swain had unaccountably mislaid his keys, and he wanted to know if the steward hadn't, he said; and Lanyard for one knew that he spake sooth, since at that moment the missing keys were resting on the bottom of the sea several miles astern—all but one.

And after dinner he segregated himself as usual in his favorite chair near the taffrail. The fog, if anything denser than before, manufactured an early dusk of a peculiarly depressing violet shade. Nevertheless, evenings are long in that season of the year, and to Lanyard it seemed that the twilight would never quite fade out completely, true night would never come.

Long before it did, speed was slackened; the yacht was at length in soundings; the calls of the seamen operating the lead were as monotonous as the whistle blasts, and almost as frequent.

Another sign that the *Sybarite* had entered what are technically classified as inland waters, where special rules of the road apply, was to be remarked in the fact that the fog signal was now roaring once each minute, whereas Lanyard had grown accustomed to timing the intervals between the sounding of the ship's bell, upon which all his interest hung, at the rate of fifteen blasts to the half hour.

In retrospect he counted those two hours between dinner and ten-thirty longer than the fortnight which had prefaced them. So in the heart of man, ever impatient when the journey's end draws near, though that end be but the beginning as well, of that longer journey which men call Death.

Least he betray his impatience by keeping the tips of his cigarettes too bright (one never knows when one is not watched) he smoked sparingly. But on the twenty-eighth blare of the whistle after the ringing of four bells, he drew out his cigarette case, and as the thirtieth raved out, synchronous with two double strokes and a single on brazen metal, he placed a cigarette between his lips.

At the same time he saw Captain Monk, who had been on the bridge with the officer of the watch for several hours, come aft with a weary droop in the carriage of his shoulders, and go below by the saloon companionway.

There now remained on the bridge only Mr. Collison and the man at the wheel.

Upon the fourth blast after five bells Lanyard put a match to his cigarette. But he did not puff more than to get the tobacco well lighted.

With the next succeeding fog-signal darkness absolute descended upon the vessel, shrouding it from stem to stern like a vast blanket of blackness.

Mr. Mussey had not failed to keep his pact of treachery!

Lanyard was out of his chair before the first call of excited remonstrance rang out on deck—to be echoed in clamor. His cigarette stopped behind, on the taffrail, carefully placed, at precisely the height

of his head, its little glowing tip the only spot of light on the decks.

Nothing of that afternoon's unsureness of foot in the way Lanyard moved forward. Passing the engine room ventilators he heard the telegraph give a single stroke: Mr. Collison had only then recovered from his astonishment sufficiently to signal to slow down. A squeal of the speaking-tube whistle followed instantly, and Lanyard set foot upon the bridge in time to hear Mr. Collison demanding to know what the sanguinary hades had happened down there. Whatever reply he got seemed to exasperate him into incoherence. He stuttered with rage, gasped, and addressed the man at the wheel:

"I've got a flash-lamp in my cabin. That'll show us the compass-card at least. Stand by while I run down and get it."

The man mumbled an "Aye, aye, sir." Retreating footsteps were just audible.

Neither speaker had been visible to Lanyard. By putting out a hand he could have touched the helmsman, but his body made not even the shadow of a silhouette against the sky. The fog rendered that night the simple and unqualified negation of light.

And in that time of Stygian gloom violence was done swiftly, surely, and without mercy; with pity, yes, and with regrets. Lanyard was sorry for the man at the wheel. But what was to be done, could not be done in any other way.

The surprise aided him, for the fellow offered barely a show of opposition. His astounded faculties had no more than recognized the call for resistance when he was powerless in Lanyard's hands. Swung bodily away from the wheel, he went over the rail to the forward deck like a bag of sugar. Immediately Lanyard turned to the binnacle.

Sensitive fingers located the key-hole in the pedestal, the one key saved from the ring which Mr. Swain had so unfortunately and unaccountably lost opened the door—the same key, of course, that Mr. Swain had employed under Lanyard's eyes when demonstrating the functions of the binnacle to Liane Delorme.

Thrusting a hand into the opening, Lanyard groped for the adjustable magnets in their racks and one by one removed and dropped them upon the grating at the foot of the binnacle.

He worked with hands amazingly nimble and sure, and so was closing and relocking the door when Mr. Collison tumbled up the ladder with his flash-light. When the second mate arrived upon the bridge, Lanyard was waiting for him; and, in consequence of a second act of deplorable violence, Mr. Collison returned to the deck backwards, and lay quite still while Lanyard turned back to the wheel.

Collecting the abstracted magnets he carried them to the rail, cast them into the sea and threw in the key to the little door to keep them company. Then he unscrewed the brass caps of the cylindrical brass tube which housed the Flinders bar, removed that also, replaced the caps, and consigned the bar to the sea in its turn.

He would have liked to make a good job of it and do away with the quadrantal

correctors as well, but judged that he had done mischief enough to secure his ends. The compass ought now to be as constant to the magnetic pole as a humming-bird to one especial rose.

Guiding himself by a hand that lightly touched the rail, Lanyard regained his chair, carefully composing himself in the position in which he had been resting when the lights went out. His cigarette was still aglow; good Turkish has this virtue among many others, that left to itself, it will burn on to the end of its roll.

The next instant, however, he was on his feet again. A beam of light had swept across the saloon skylight, coming from below, the beam of an electric portable torch. It might have been the signal for the first piercing scream of Liane Delorme. A pistol shot with a vicious accent cut short the scream. After a brief pause several more shots rippled in the saloon. A man shouted angrily. Then the beam of the torch found and steadied upon the mouth of the companionway. Against that glare, a burly figure was instantaneously relieved, running up to the deck. When it gained the topmost step a final report sounded in the saloon, and the figure checked, revolved slowly on a heel, tottered, and plunged headforemost down the steps again.

A moment later (incredible that the stipulated ten minutes should have passed so quickly!) the lights came on, and with a still-fuming cigarette stump between his fingers Lanyard went below.

His bewildered gaze discovered first Liane Delorme, drawn up rigidly—she seemed for some reason to be standing tip-toe—against the starboard partition, near her stateroom door. Her fingers were clawing her cheeks, her eyes were widely dilate with horror and fright, her mouth was wide, and from it issued, as by some mechanical means, shriek upon hollow shriek—cries wholly flat and meaningless, having no character of any sort, mere automatic reflexes of hysteria.

On the opposite side of the saloon, not far from the door to his own quarters, Monk lay semi-prone with a purple face and protruding eyeballs, far gone toward death through strangulation. Phinuit, on his knees, was removing the silk handkerchief twisted about that lean throat.

At the foot of the companionway steps, Popinot, no phantom but the veritable *apache* himself, was writhing and heaving convulsively; and even as Lanyard looked, the huge body of the creature lifted from the floor in one last, heroic spasm, then collapsed, and moved no more.

Viewing this horrid tableau, appreciating what it meant—that Popinot, forearmed with advice from a trustworthy source, had stationed himself outside the door to Monk's stateroom, to waylay and garotte the man whom he expected to emerge therefrom laden with plunder from Monk's safe—Lanyard appreciated further that he had done Mr. Mussey a great wrong.

For he had all the time believed that the chief engineer was laying a trap for him on behalf of his ancient shipmate, that unhappy victim of groundless jealousy, Captain Whitaker Monk.

For the solution of the mystery of the strange disappearance and pursuit of the de Montalais jewels—a mystery that has challenged the ingenuity of many of the keenest minds of the country—read *September Cosmopolitan*. Order your copy from your news-dealer to-day.



The scientifically correct tooth paste

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LISTERINE Tooth Paste contains a small amount of a pleasant, mild fruit acid derived from the grape. This fruit acid assures that adequate saliva flow which helps Nature keep your teeth sound.

Note how your mouth waters when you brush your teeth with this delightful paste and the fresh, clean, polished

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LAMBERT PHARMACAL COMPANY, SAINT LOUIS, U. S. A.

Flash Molloy

(Concluded from page 72)

But even as he struck, with despair he knew he had not met the ball squarely. He had topped it; as he ran, he saw it trickle toward the third-baseman, a weak grounder, ready-made for a double-play. He ran desperately, in a passion of revolt at what was happening to him, and half down, he was praying. It was not a long prayer. "O God, O God, O God," he prayed. The ball was reaching the third-baseman; everything was over. Suddenly the ball shot up in the air like a geyser. It had found a pebble; the only pebble probably on the whole clean surface of this meticulously kept diamond. The ball hit the third-baseman between the eyes, dazed him—and Flash was on first, safe!

Bob Sands was on second; two men on bases. Truck Burns came up to the bat.

As Truck walked to the plate, he was addressing silently a little lady very far away. "Clare, I must save your boy," he was saying, though not one of these thousands about him knew it, no one in the wide world—unless, miraculously, the lady herself, so fervently addressed. "Clare, I must save your boy!"

He did not know of the change which had taken place in Clare's boy since that fatal third inning, so that to him one thing was perfectly clear. The only way to save Flash was to give him no chance whatsoever to lose himself. The only way was to chase him in, all the way in. The only way was a home-run. "Clare," he said, as he stepped to the plate, "I've got to hit a homer!"

And Flash at first, saved for the nonce by the fates—and a pebble—taking a desperate lead off the base was also desperately praying. "Oh, Truck, hit the ball!" he was praying. "Oh, Truck, hit the ball! Truck, give me a chance!"

Truck, his plan made up, crouched low, close to the plate, "crowding" the plate—

a trick to hamper the pitcher, a dangerous one.

The pitcher immediately came on with the classic retort—a "bean ball," a high, close in-shoot, aimed at the batter's head to intimidate him.

Truck Burns threw himself back in a wide, exaggerated jump.

The pitcher, well-satisfied, now threw a wide curve aimed to cut an outer corner of the plate—and to everyone's astonishment, once more Truck threw himself back, as though he had been utterly unmanned by that first bean ball.

But now came a diversion most unwelcome to Truck. Flash, taking a great lead at first, had drawn a throw, just leaping back in time. Now, he drew another, barely making the slide back.

For several moments which seemed an age to Truck, the pitcher gave his attention to Flash who, in his despairing eagerness, was trying to "rattle" him, and draw a bad throw. Truck's heart was in his shoes. He feared two things: that Flash be caught off the bag, and that the pitcher forget the sequence with which he was "playing" Truck.

But the pitcher did not forget. When, having succeeded in holding Flash closer to the bag, he turned once more his attention to Truck, he remembered. He remembered that, after a bean ball, Truck had thrown himself back on an outcurve. The thing to give this batter now was another bean ball—after which, altogether shaky, he would be easy prey.

So he sent to Truck another bean ball. But this was exactly what Truck was waiting for. He stepped back a trifle, swung at the fast ball, hit it square, and sent it in a long, long incredible upward slant, into the sky and over the fence.

The spectators—those who were not crazed and they were few—were now given an uncommon sight. The Socks' third-

baseman, running ahead of the hitter, crossed the plate, then threw himself full length on the ground by the bench, where he lay shaking, his face buried in his arms.

His mates gathered around him. "What's the matter, Flash?" "Are you hurt?" "Is the wind knocked out of you?" "What is it—your knee?" "Got a cramp?"

But it was Truck alone who, at one glance, saw what those shaking shoulders meant; Truck who, taking hold of the situation, motioned the others away while he knelt by his friend, watching, listening, without touching him, without speaking; Truck who, when he saw the paroxysm over, cunningly passed the trainer's sponge over the rising man's face, obliterating the traces of what had happened.

The game, thus tied, went to the fifteenth inning before Flash sent Bobbie Sands home by hitting, on the right-field fence, the sign which promised a derby hat.

That night Truck was at his elbow when he met the oldish jockey and crammed back upon him—rather down his throat than into his pocket, the five new bills, now a tight, ignoble wad. Flash, although he had little right to the luxury of indignant self-righteousness, was proceeding to follow the bills with his fist, when called off by the watchful Truck.

Once around the corner from the scene, Flash saw that Truck was right. "Truck," he said, "old pal, you're always right. You've saved my neck to-day, and I want you to always stick close. I wish Clare were coming back," he added a bit wistfully.

"She is," said Truck. "She's on the way; she'll be here in time for the big series. You see"—he looked at Flash, hesitated, then went on. "You see—I cabled to her—a week ago. I think she's coming back for good."

"Truck," said Flash. "You and Clare stick close to me. Because, Truck, you know I'm just one big, capital D fool!"

The Man Who Wouldn't Be Told

(Continued from page 94)

His temporary employment of a few hours a day allowed him to pay his room-rent and to eat poor food in unpleasant surroundings, and for the remainder of his time he forced his soul to travel down a pen, transforming first-class dreams into what the producing managers told him were fourth-class manuscripts. At each of these reverses he saw two visions: one of them was Nancy, smiling at him from the hedge of bridal-wreath, and the other was Mr. Hunter, solemnly wagging his head, and saying, "I told you so." It was the blending of these two visions which kept him working late at night, when his vitality was all but exhausted and his common sense had fallen lower than his energy.

The year had passed him by without recognition, and he was facing another sweltering summer in his boxlike room when a friend, leaving the city for several months, offered him rent-free his studio-apartment.

"And will I forward you the mail?" inquired his landlady affronted.

Roger nodded.

"If you will, please. That is, not circulars like this—" He held out an envelop, unopened. "You can tell a circular from a letter, can't you?"

"Sure, but you don't look for no *furrin* circulars, do you?" asked the woman, with a leer which she meant to be comprehensive.

In the flush of composition, he had given himself some slight credit for genius, and he had excused a part of his failure on the ground that he was a pioneer; but now, when his surroundings had suddenly become luxurious, when he sat down in a snug apartment, with one of his friend's cigars in place of a cheap cigarette, and his friend's shiny new typewriter in place of a leaky fountain pen, his point of view became mildly capitalistic, and as he reread some of his earlier scripts, he was startled by the youthful pessimism which had unconsciously crept into them.

His new surroundings affected his disposition, and his disposition affected his style. In August, he got his initial praise, and his initial offer, from a manager.

"If this would only be doctored, Bennett, it might come close to having what you'd almost call an outside chance."

Roger shook his head.

"You don't need a doctor for it. Tell me what to do, and I'll do it myself. I want the advertising."

"But the advertising that in its present shape, it would give you, Bennett, would be like the beck kick of a mule's hind foot. I tell you: I'll give you a flat royalty of two per cent. on the gross, and your name on the billing comes after the name of what doctor I got to hire to fix it up. Is it a trade?"

He realized that he had better go to any lengths, take any proposition, and suffer any humiliation to see his name on the billing and to get a play on Broadway; there was plenty of time to be arbitrary—when he could afford it.

"All right," he said shortly. "It's a trade."

He sent off a magnificent cablegram to Nancy, and it brought him a response which raised his temperature another full

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THE CLERK WILL HAND YOU BACK
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degree. There was no reference to Mr. Hunter in it, but Roger could see the picture, nevertheless. He could see Nancy forcing her father to eat his words, and he knew that Mr. Hunter would find them indigestible.

The rehearsals and the try-out thrilled him, but by the time the play was brought to New York, he sensed that it was flimsy and couldn't last. As a matter of fact, it lasted exactly four weeks, and his whole share of royalties was less than five hundred dollars; but he had got himself a foothold on Parnassus, and he didn't intend to let himself be pried away from it.

His friend returned, and Roger moved out of luxury, taking his new point of view along with him. Once more he resolutely whipped his brain, and drove it through the mazes of a comedy-drama which eventually ran three weeks on Forty-second Street, and a month in Chicago before it was scrapped to the motion-picture people. In bulk, it netted him a trifle less than four thousand dollars, and in his cable to Nancy, who was in India, he stated the precise amount in dollars and cents. But his next play opened in Atlantic City, and closed there, too, without a glimpse of Manhattan; and five months later he witnessed the dismal flopping of what he had thought to be his masterpiece. When he next spoke to a manager, the man shook his head.

"Bennett," he said, "I like you, but your stuff don't *ect*. It don't *ect*, and that means you ain't delivering the goods. Now, if you was to engage a lawyer to draw you up a contract, and he wouldn't do it to hold water, Bennett—you understand me?" Roger understood him very well, and the accidental illustration made him shiver. "Everybody must deliver the goods, or where's the margin of profit? And your stuff don't hold water—understand me?—and I like you, Bennett, I like you, but I couldn't take the chance."

This, then, was his predicament: From India, Nancy had written to honor him in terms of reputation, and on the Rialto he wasn't considered worth another chance. Mr. Hunter had sent him a stiff little note to acknowledge his commercial progress, and with a record of four plays already produced, he was worth a meager thousand or two, with his market abruptly turned sour. Even if Nancy, coming home, came back to him, what would her father say? Roger could hear him say it. "You'd have done better financially, young man, and you'd have a reputation *worth* something if you'd taken my advice and stayed in Carthage. But you wouldn't be told."

As the year fled past him, his desperation increased. Nancy was in Russia, and his new play was hardly past the boiling-point; Nancy was in Japan, and the script was hardly out of the clutches of the typist; Nancy was in the Philippines, and a manager was shaking his head. A good play, yes; it read like a very good play indeed; but the public didn't seem to care for Mr. Bennett's work, so—and a shrug of the shoulders.

He could hear Mr. Hunter saying that it didn't pay to gamble with ideas; but the time was short, and it was all or nothing. So that he bought a third interest in the production and paid his last dollar for it, and on this basis the manager agreed to go ahead. And Nancy was in

the Philippines when the play was cast, and she was sailing through the Panama Canal when the critics told the world that Roger Bennett, after four times fainting on the threshold, had actually crossed it and put over a success. They meant this, of course, for a sprightly metaphor, but they had it backward. What really happened was that Roger, after four times fighting down his weariness and disappointment, saw his fifth play open, read the notices, heard that seats were selling ten weeks in advance, and gracefully collapsed, so that he couldn't go down and welcome Nancy on the pier.

But she came to him; she came flying to him as soon as his message had ever reached her, and, at the first sight of her, his eyes filled and his tongue betrayed him, and he could only hold out his arms to her and wonder if she would be the same to him as she had always been.

She was changed—adorably changed—but she was still the same. She dropped on her knees beside him, and kissed him, and cried over him; and in the background Mr. Hunter, who had come as official chaperon—he was unchanged, too, and coughed his opinion of any such emotionalism.

"You'll—you'll laugh at me," stammered Roger presently, "but—but look under my pillow. I've been saving them for you. Press-clippings."

"Laugh at you!" she faltered. "Oh, my poor darling tired boy! Laugh at you!"

From the background, Mr. Hunter coughed again.

"I seem to be rather unnecessary here," he said, with dignity, "so if there's anything I can do for you, perhaps I'd better do it."

Roger thanked him effusively.

"I don't believe there is, though—unless you'd care to open that pile of letters, and run through it. Some of it's been there two or three days. I *do* get sort of tired; there's so many of them." And promptly forgot that Mr. Hunter existed.

Mr. Hunter, with the undisputed remark that no man could hope to be a success unless he opened his mail and disposed of it the same day he received it, sat down and methodically began to slit envelopes. Roger looked up at Nancy.

"You—you didn't find anybody else, did you?" he whispered.

She shook her head.

"Didn't you believe me?"

"I was afraid."

"I wasn't. I must have more faith in you than you have in me."

"It isn't that. You're *so* lovely! Do you know what this play means?"

"I know what it means to *you*. Like getting out of prison."

"How on earth did you know that? Yes, it does. And it means a heap of money—maybe thirty or forty thousand dollars; maybe *twice* that, counting the picture-rights."

"Oh, Roger!"

"To me, that's the smallest part of it. I've got a reputation. And you." He gestured toward her father and lowered his voice. "What does *he* think of it? You're mine now, anyway, but what *does* he think about it?"

At this moment there was a curious exclamation from Mr. Hunter. The two young people stared at him, and saw that

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his eyes were bulging; Nancy hurried over to him and spoke apprehensively.

"What's the matter, dad; what *is* it?"

Mr. Hunter wet his lips repeatedly. He gave her a letter, and motioned to Roger. "Good God!" he said, hoarsely. "Good God!"

The letter was from the Carthage Motor Company, a young concern which was turning out, with incredible speed, a cloud of spidery little automobiles which had overrun the country like a plague of locusts. It was incorrectly addressed to Roger, and had reached him in a very roundabout way, and the tone of it implied that countless previous communications had remained unanswered. It spoke of stock dividend Number Three, and cash dividend Number One, and implored him to furnish a permanent address, to which his stock certificates and his check could be duly forwarded.

Roger gazed at it, unmoved.

"That's a queer mistake," he said. "I don't own any of their stock; I don't own *any* stock." Then all at once, he caught sight of a subcaption to the letter-head, and he turned pale, for the "Carthage Motor Company" was merely the altered title of that odd little concern for which he had drawn the papers of incorporation, and drawn them so badly that he had become a dramatist. He had struggled for an hour to wrest a fifteen-dollar fee from a poverty-stricken inventor, and finally, because he couldn't afford to overlook the thinnest opportunity, and because he was moved by sympathy for the man whom Mr. Hunter had called a nut, he had accepted five shares of stock—a tenth interest. The stock dividends had preserved the ratio; he still owned his tenth, and the company was one of the miracles of modern business. His reason tripped on the reality.

"Why," he said, in a dazed undertone, "I used to get these letters from these people—over a year ago—two years ago—I thought they were—I thought they were circulars from some dealer . . . or a bond-issue, or something—" His voice trailed off into silence, and he lay back, limp. "And—if I'd known it . . ." He began to laugh hysterically. "Sup-sup-pose when I didn't have the p-price of a square meal—I'd heard I could s-sell those shares f-for maybe a hundred d-dollars apiece!" He raised himself, weakly, on his elbow, and aimed his finger at Mr. Hunter. "Y-you see," he said, "it—it *didn't* pay to watch the exit, now, d-did it?"

Mr. Hunter was unsteadily on his feet.

"Do you mean to tell me—" He choked and turned wildly to his daughter.

"Do you see what he's done? Do you see what he's done? Because he—when he'd have been satisfied with a fifteen- or twenty-dollar fee—from a man I sent him; I sent him—when he was such a rotten lawyer he couldn't draw the simplest set of papers—when he was such a rotten lawyer he'd *take* stock for a fee—" Mr. Hunter was trembling violently. "Why, he—he's got a tenth interest in a concern that—why, he's worth—why, the Lord *only knows* what he's worth, and"—his voice rose piteously—"and all the time he's such a rotten business man *he didn't know he had it!*"

Over on his couch Roger had subsided. Years ago the older man had laid down

principles which he declared were basic, and pointed out pitfalls which he declared were deadly, and Roger Bennett, quietly rejecting all this counsel, had become a good playwright because he had it in him, and had become a Croesus because he had once been poor and sympathetic. He knew that both his triumphs, gained in this manner, must be peculiarly embarrassing to Mr. Hunter, but even in the lethargy of stupefaction which now came over him, he was aware that never again could he be irritated or made resentful, by whatever brand of advice the older man saw fit to offer him.

Wealth! Was it possible? Blind luck, but—how strange that Mr. Hunter should be so excited over what was merely lucky money, and so calm about a deservedly won success.

And what was luck, anyway?

What was the difference between gambling in fees for sympathy, or in ideas for ambition, or in Carthage real estate for deliberate profit?

Life was all a gamble, anyway, if you wanted to consider it so. And in any so-called form of gambling, life included, somebody has to win!

Why was it so remarkable that he himself had won?

His head was aching viciously; the past half-hour had been too confusing, too crowded with brilliant, blinding revelations. He was weak and tired, and Mr. Hunter bothered him; he wanted to be alone with Nancy, and to hear her say that she loved him for himself, and admired him for all that he had done for her.

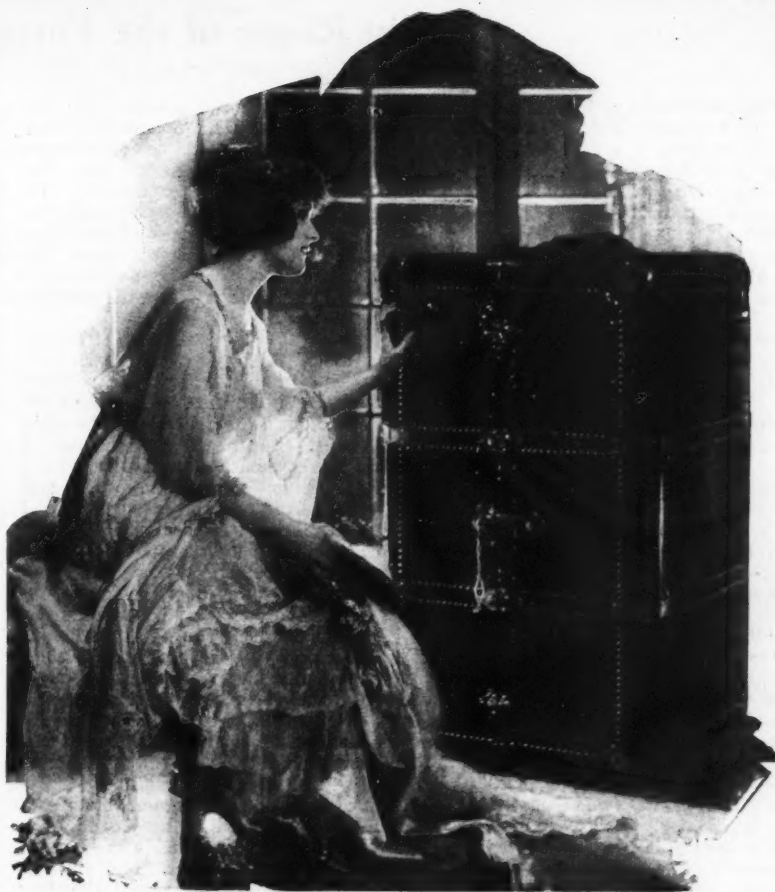
"Well," he said, stupidly, "that's pretty nice, if it's true. Only, somehow I don't really feel I need it. It sort of makes me dizzy, Nancy; hold my hand. Only, you see, it wasn't anything I did—but this play of mine, Nancy, this play of mine—I did that. Yes, I did—I did it for you. It's a fine play; it really is. They all say so, all of them. It'll make us all the money we want—all we want. They say it's the best play this season. Isn't that something, dearest—isn't that something?"

From his chair by the window, the oracle of Carthage was breathing heavily, and his eyes were bulging.

"And the young fool wouldn't be told!" he repeated under his breath. "He wouldn't be told; he wouldn't be told; he wouldn't be told—" He glanced at his daughter, and at Roger, and he put his hand feebly to his forehead. "By George!" he whispered. "It's all wrong! It's all wrong! Why—why, by George, that sort of thing is—is what makes socialists!" His brain was sick with the comparison between Roger and himself—distinguished lawyer and incompetent tyro; man of sense and foresight and boy of idle visionings; the one a practical man of affairs, the other a blacksmith in words and syllables; himself, retired with a competence at fifty-three, and Roger a man of destiny in the theater, and a prince of fortune at twenty-six. He wondered dumbly if Roger were thinking of the comparison, too.

Over on the couch, Roger was saying dreamily:

"Then, in the second act, there's a scene in a moonlit garden, like yours in Carthage—"



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MISHAWAKA, INDIANA.

Jolly Roger of the Forests

(Continued from page 41)

and that her cheeks were paler, and that she could no longer hide the old haunted look in her eyes.

But Jolly Roger saw the look, and the growing pallor, and had noted them for two weeks past. And later that afternoon, when Nada returned to Cragg's Ridge, and he re-crossed the stream with Peter, there was a hard and terrible look in his eyes which Peter had caught there more and more frequently of late. And that evening, in the twilight of their cabin, Jolly Roger said,

"It's coming soon, Peter. I'm expecting it. Something is happening which she won't tell us about. She is afraid for me. I know it. But I'm going to find out—soon. And then, *Pied-bot*, I think we'll probably kill Jed Hawkins, and hit for the North."

The gloom of foreboding that was in Jolly Roger's voice and words seemed to settle over the cabin for many days after that, and more than ever Peter sensed the thrill and warning of that mysterious something which was impending.

Peter was quick to learn, and Jolly Roger's word became his law, so that only once or twice was he told a thing, and it became a part of his understanding. While the keen, shrewd brain of his Airedale father developed inside Peter's head, the flesh and blood development of his big, gentle, soft-footed Mackenzie hound mother kept pace in his body. His legs and feet began to lose their grotesqueness. Flesh began to cover the knots in his tail. His head, bristling fiercely with wiry whiskers, seemed to pause for a space to give his lanky body a chance to catch up with it. And in spite of his big feet, so clumsy that a few weeks ago they had stumbled over everything in his way, he could now travel without making a sound.

So it came to pass, after a time, that when Peter heard footsteps approaching the cabin he made no effort to reveal himself until he knew it was Jolly Roger who was coming. And this was strangely in spite of the fact that in the five weeks since Nada had brought him from Cragg's Ridge no one but Jolly Roger and Nada had set foot within sight of the shack. It was an inborn caution, growing stronger in him each day. There came one early evening when Peter made a discovery. He had returned with Jolly Roger from a fishing trip farther down the creek, and scarcely had he set nose to the little clearing about the cabin when he caught the presence of a strange scent. He investigated it swiftly, and found it all about the cabin, and very strong close up against the cabin door. There were no doubts in Peter's mind. A man had been there, and this man had gone around and around the cabin, and had opened the door, and had even gone inside, for Peter found the scent of him on the floor. He tried, in a way, to tell Jolly Roger. He bristled, and whined, and looked searchingly into the darkening edge of the forest. Jolly Roger quested with him for a few moments, and when he failed to find marks in the ground he began cleaning a fish for supper, and said,

"Probably a wolverine, *Pied-bot*. The rascal came to see what he could find while we were away."

But Peter was not satisfied. He was restless all that night. Sounds which had been familiar now held a new significance for him. The next day he was filled with a quiet but brooding expectancy. He resented the intrusion of the strange footprints. It was, in his process of instinctive reasoning, an encroachment upon the property rights of his master, and he was—true to the law of his species—the guardian of those rights.

The fourth evening after the stranger's visit to the cabin Jolly Roger was later than usual in returning from Cragg's Ridge. Peter had been on a hunting adventure of his own, and came to the cabin at sunset. But he never came out of cover now without standing quietly for a few moments, getting the wind, and listening. And to-night, poking his head between some balsams twenty yards from the shack, he was treated to a sudden thrill. The cabin door was open. And standing close to this door, looking quietly and cautiously about, stood a stranger. He was not like Jed Hawkins, was Peter's first impression. He was tall, with a wide-brimmed hat, and wore boots with striped trousers tucked into them, and on his coat were bits of metal which caught the last gleams of the sun. Peter knew nothing of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police. But he sensed danger, and he remained very quiet, without moving a muscle of his head or body, while the stranger looked about, with a hand on his unbuttoned pistol-holster. Not until he entered the cabin, and closed the door after him, did Peter move back into the deeper gloom of the forest. And then, silent as a fox, he skulked through cover to the foot-trail, and down the trail to the ford, across which Jolly Roger would come from Cragg's Ridge.

There was still half an hour of daylight when Jolly Roger arrived. Peter did not, as usual, run to the edge of the bank to meet him. He remained sitting stolidly on his haunches, with his ears flattened, and in his whole attitude no sign of gladness at his master's coming. With every instinct of caution developed to the highest degree within him, Jolly Roger was lightning quick to observe the significance of small things. He spoke to Peter, caressed him with his hand, and moved on along the foot-trail toward the cabin. Peter fell in behind him moodily, and after a few moments stopped, and squatted on his haunches again. Jolly Roger was puzzled.

"What is it, Peter?" he asked. "Are you afraid of that wolverine?"

Peter whined softly; but even as he whined, his ears were flat, and his eyes filled with a red light as they glared down the trail beyond the outlaw. Jolly Roger turned and went on, until he disappeared around a twist in the path. There he stopped, and peered back. Peter was not following him, but still sat where he had left him. A quicker breath came to Jolly Roger's lips, and he went back to Peter. For fully a minute he stood beside him, watching and listening, and not once did the reddish glare in Peter's eyes leave the direction of the cabin. Jolly Roger's eyes had grown very bright, and suddenly he dropped on his knees

beside Peter, and spoke softly, close up to his flattened ear.

"You say it isn't a wolverine, Peter? Is that what you're trying to tell me?"

Peter's teeth clicked, and he whimpered, never taking his eyes from ahead.

And now there was a cold, strange light in Jolly Roger's eyes as he rose to his feet, and he turned swiftly and quietly into the edge of the forest, and in the gloom that was gathering there his hand carried the big automatic. Peter followed him now, and Jolly Roger swung in a wide circle, so that they came up on that forest side of the cabin where there was no window. And here Jolly Roger knelt down beside Peter again, and whispered to him,

"You stay here, *Pied-bot*. Understand? You stay here."

He pressed him down gently with his hand, so that Peter understood. Then, slinking low, and swift as a cat, Jolly Roger ran to the end of the cabin where there was no window. With his head close to the ground he peered out cautiously at the door. It was closed. Then he looked at the windows. To the west the curtains were up, as he had left them. And to the east—

A whimsical smile played at the corners of his mouth. Those curtains he had kept tightly drawn. One of them was down now. But the other was raised two inches, so that one hidden within the cabin could watch the approach from the trail!

He drew back, and under his breath he chuckled. He recognized the sheer nerve of the thing, the clever handiwork of it. Some one was inside the cabin, and he was ready to stake his life it was Cassidy, the Irish bloodhound of "M" Division. If anyone ferreted him out 'way down here on the first edge of civilization he had gambled with himself that it would be Cassidy. And Cassidy had come—Cassidy, who had hung like a wolf to his trails for three years, who had chased him across the Barren Lands, who had followed him up the Mackenzie and back again—who had fought with him, and starved with him, and froze with him, yet had never brought him to prison. Deep down in his heart Jolly Roger loved Cassidy. They had played, and were still playing, a thrilling game, and to win that game had become the life's ambition of each. And now Cassidy was in there, confident that at last he had his man, and waiting for him to step into the trap.

To Jolly Roger, in the face of its possible tragedy, there was a deep-seated humor in the situation. Three times in the last year and a half had he turned the tables on Cassidy, leaving him floundering in the cleverly woven webs which the man-hunter had placed for his victim. This was the fourth time. And Cassidy would be tremendously upset!

Praying that Peter would remain quiet, Jolly Roger took off his shoes. After that he made no more sound than a ferret as he crept to the door. An inch at a time he raised himself, until he was standing up, with his ear half an inch from the crack that ran lengthwise of the frame. Holding his breath, he listened. For an interminable time, it seemed to him, there was no sound from within. He guessed what

Cassidy was doing—peering through that slit of window under the curtain. But he was not absolutely sure. And he knew the necessity of making no error, with Cassidy in there, gripping the butt of his gun.

Suddenly he heard a movement. A man's steps, subdued and yet distinct, were moving from the window toward the door. Half-way they paused, and turned to one of the windows looking westward. But it was evident the watcher was not expecting his game from that direction, for after a moment's silence he returned to the window through which he could see the trail. This time Jolly Roger was sure. Cassidy was again peering through the window, with his back toward him, and every muscle in the forest rover's body gathered for instant action. In another moment he had flung open the door, and the watcher at the window whirled about to find himself looking straight into the muzzle of Jolly Roger's gun.

For several minutes after that last swift movement of Jolly Roger's, Peter lay where his master had left him, his eyes fairly popping from his head in his eagerness to see what was happening. He heard voices, and then the wild thrill of Jolly Roger's laughter, and restraining himself no longer, he trotted cautiously to the open door of the cabin. In a chair sat the stranger with the broad-brimmed hat and high boots, with his hands securely tied behind him. And Jolly Roger was hustling about, filling a shoulder-pack in the last light of the day.

"Cassidy, I oughta kill you," Jolly Roger was saying as he worked, an exultant chuckle in his voice. "You don't give me any peace. No matter where I go you're sure to come, and I can't remember that I ever invited you. I oughta put you out of the way, and plant flowers over you, now that I've got the chance. But I'm too chicken-hearted. Besides, I like you. By the time you get tired of chasing me you should be a pretty good man-hunter. But just now you lack *finesse*, Cassidy—you lack *finesse*." And Jolly Roger's chuckle broke into another laugh.

Cassidy heaved out a grunt. "It's luck—just rotten luck!" he growled.

"If it is, I hope it keeps up," said Jolly Roger. "Now, look here, Cassidy! Let's make a man's bet of it. If you don't get me next time—if you fail, and I turn the trick on you once more—will you quit?"

Cassidy's eyes gleamed in the thickening dusk.

"If I don't get you next time—I'll hand in my resignation!"

The laughter went out of Jolly Roger's voice.

"I believe you, Cassidy. You've played square—always. And now—if I free your hands—will you swear to give me a two hours' start before you leave this cabin?"

"I'll give you the start," said Cassidy.

His lean face was growing indistinct in the gloom.

Jolly Roger came up behind him. There was the slash of a knife. Then he picked up his shoulder-pack. At the door he paused.

"Look at your watch when I'm gone, Cassidy, and be sure you make it a full two hours."



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"I'll make it two hours and five minutes," said Cassidy. "Hittin' north are you, Jolly Roger?"

"I'm hittin'—bushward," replied the outlaw. "I'm going where it's plenty thick and hard to travel, Cassidy. Good-by—"

He was gone. He hit straight north, making noise as he went, but once in the timber he swung southward, and plunged through the creek with Peter

under his arm. Not until they had traveled a good half mile over the plain did Jolly Roger speak. Then he said, speaking directly at Peter,

"Cassidy thinks I'll sure hit for the North country again, *Pied-bot*. But we're foolin' him. I've sort of planned on something like this happening, and right now we're hittin' for the tail-end of Cragg's Ridge where there's a mess of rock that the devil himself can hardly get into. We've got to do it, boy. We can't leave

Never has the gifted James Oliver Curwood written of his beloved north woods with greater charm than in this great series of stories that center about an outlaw, a girl and a dog. And in **September Cosmopolitan** will appear one of the best of all—"Honor and the Outlaw." To be sure of getting your September copy, order from your newsdealer now.

The Empty Sack

(Continued from page 88)

of her forces. If she went on much longer they would snap.

"I'll run away now, Ted," she said, rising. "It's splendid to see you so bucked up. I'll be here again about this time tomorrow, and bring you something nice. Momma's busy already making you a fruit-cake." She added, as she held him by the hand, "I suppose you'll have to have a lawyer."

A memory came to him like that of something heard while under an anæsthetic.

"I think the judge said this morning that he'd appoint some one to—to defend me."

"Oh, we'll do better than that," she smiled cheerily. "I've got some money. We'll have a lawyer of our own."

The journey home was the hardest thing Jennie had ever had to face. Teddy! Teddy brought to this! It was all she could say to herself. The bare fact dwarfed all its causes, immediate or remote.

Eager for privacy in which to sob, she was speeding along Indiana Avenue when, happening to glance in the direction of her home, she saw Gladys standing on the sidewalk. Gladys, having at the same minute perceived her, started with a violent bound in her direction. She, too, had a newspaper in her hand, leading Jennie to expect a repetition of Gussie's episode that morning.

It was such a repetition, and it was not. It was, to the extent that Gladys had been informed of Teddy's drama much as her elder sister at Corinne's, though later in the day. But she was not a cash-girl for nothing; the instincts of the city *gamine* endowed her with alertness of mind beyond either of her sisters. She remembered that the paper she had seen was a morning one, and that by this hour those of the afternoon would be on the news-stands. They would not only give further details but possibly tell her that the whole story was untrue. Somewhere she had heard that among the New York evening papers one was renowned for solemnity and exactitude. Veracity costing a cent more than she usually spent for the evening news, when she spent anything, which was rare, she felt the occasion worth the extravagance.

In these pages, Teddy's case was condensed into so small a paragraph that she had difficulty in finding it; but during the search she lighted on something else. It was something so extraordinary, so unbelievable, so impossible to assimilate, as to

thrust even Teddy's situation well into the second place.

After that, all the known methods of locomotion were slow to Gladys in her efforts to reach home; but before she could enter the house, she had seen Jennie advancing up the avenue, and so ran back to meet her.

"Oh, Jen! Look!"

It was all she had breath to say, so that Jennie naturally did as she was bidden. But she, too, found the paragraph thrust beneath her eyes extraordinary, unbelievable, and impossible to assimilate, though for other reasons than those that swayed her sister.

COLLINGHAM—FOLLETT. On May 11th, at St. Titus's Rectory, Madison Avenue, by the Rev. Larned Goodbody, Robert Bradley Collingham, Jr., of Marillo Park, N. Y., to Jane Scarborough Follett, of Pemberton Heights, N. J.

Of the many things Jennie didn't comprehend, she comprehended this paragraph least of all. Who had put it in the paper, and what did it mean? She walked on dreamily, Gladys trotting beside her, a living interrogation-point.

"Oh, Jen, what's it all about? Are you married to him really?"

Jennie answered as best she knew how.

"Not—not exactly."

But here Gladys was too quick for her.

"If you're married to him at all, it's got to be exactly, hasn't it?"

"I—I did go through—through the ceremony."

"Well then, you've got the law on him," Gladys declared earnestly. "He'll have to pay you alimony anyhow."

"I—I don't want him to pay me anything."

"Not pay you anything, and him with a wad as big as a haystack? Oh, Jen, you're not going dippy like poor momma, are you?"

Jennie wondered if she was. It seemed to her as if she could stand little more in the line of revolution without her mind giving way.

And yet within a few minutes she received another shock. It came through Gussie, who ran to meet them at the door.

"For mercy's sake, Jen, what's all this about?"

She fluttered an envelop on which the address was typewritten.

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the girl—just now. We can't leave—her—"

Jolly Roger's voice choked. Then he paused for a moment, and bent over to put his hand on Peter.

"If it hadn't been for you, Peter—Cassidy would have got me—sure. And I'm wondering, Peter—I'm wondering—why did God forget to give a dog speech?"

Peter whined in answer, and through the darkness of the night they went on together.

MRS. BRADLEY COLLINGHAM, JR.,
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"I told the boy it didn't belong here—" Gussie was beginning to explain when Gladys interrupted.

"Yes, it does. Read that."

Gussie read and read again.

"Well, of all—" She stopped only because she lacked the words with which to continue.

In the meanwhile, Jennie had opened her cablegram and read:

Have asked father to engage best counsel in New York to defend boy. Sailing to-morrow on *Venezuela*, and will take all responsibilities off your hands. Placed two thousand dollars to your account at Pemberton National Bank. See manager. Devoted love. Your husband, BOB.

Jennie let the slip flutter to the entry floor while she stood gazing into the air. Gussie having picked it up, the two younger sisters read it together.

"Some class!" Gladys commented dryly. But Gussie could only stare at Jennie awesomely, as if a miracle had transformed her.

XXII

ON landing from the *Venezuela*, Bob drove out to Collingham Lodge. He knew that by this time the family were in the Adirondacks, and that with Gull and his wife to look after him he should have the place to himself. Now that he was known to be married he had first thought it possible to bring Jennie there, but had decided that the big empty house might frighten her with its loneliness. A hotel in New York was what she would probably prefer; and with all he had to do for Teddy, it would doubtless be most convenient for himself. He went to his old home, therefore, only as to a base from which to make further arrangements. Having unpacked a few things and eaten a snack of lunch, he would go to see his wife at once.

It was the hot season at Marillo, and those houses which were not closed were somnolent. At Collingham Lodge, Max, with his madly joyful demonstrations, was the only expression of life. Within the house, the shades were down, the furniture befrocked. Nevertheless, it was home, and all the more home after the alien pageantry of the tropics and the south. Having bathed and changed his clothes, he

found pleasure in roaming from one dim airless room to another, as if he had been absent for a year.

It was a greater pleasure for the reason that, ever since receiving his father's amazing cablegram, the vague antagonism he had felt for two or three years toward his parents had given place to affection and gratitude. They had seemingly come round after all to acknowledging his right to be himself. The concession gave him a sense of loving them, of loving the things that belonged to them. He strolled into their rooms, looking about on the objects they used, as though in this way he got some contact with their personalities.

And yet, Jennie's family hardly entered the sphere of his conceptions. He knew she had a mother and sisters; he had seen and spoken to Teddy at the bank. But even the knowledge that the boy was in jail for killing a man didn't bring him or them near to him as realities. While there were things he should do for the boy, they would not be done for him but for Jennie. What concerned her naturally concerned her husband; but otherwise his father and mother came first.

He was thinking of this as he stood in his mother's room, gazing round on the chintzy comfort he had all his life regarded with some awe. Not since he had been a little boy had he felt so warmly toward her as now. A note from her at quarantine had assured him, as she had assured him before he went to South America, that she was his mother, and that in all trials he could count on her. Counting on her, he could count on everything. For however difficult his father might prove, she could manage him in the end. It made everything easier for him and for Jennie, turning an anxious outlook on life into a splendid hopefulness.

He was leaving the room to go and see if Mrs. Gull had cooked a chop for him when he noticed, propped against the wall and near the door by which he had come in, what looked like a picture carelessly covered with a crimson cloth. His mother had long talked of having her portrait done; he wondered if it could be that. He put his hand on it, and felt the frame. It was a picture, and, if a picture, undoubtedly the portrait.

"Let's see what the old lady looks like," were the words that passed through his mind.

With a twitch the cloth was off, and he sprang back. The start was one of surprise. Looking for no more than the exquisite conventionality he knew so well, this vital nudity caught his breath and made his heart leap. It was as if he had actually come on some living pagan love-liness seated in one of the empty rooms. Tannhäuser first beholding the goddess in the secrecy of the Venusberg must have felt something like this amazed tumult of the senses.

Turning from the great bay window in which he had hastily pulled up the shades, his excitement had consciously in it a presentiment of evil. She was so alive, and so much there on purpose!

Then a horror stole over him, like a chill that struck his bones. He crept forward, with a stricken, fascinated stare. It couldn't be, he was saying to himself; and yet—and yet—it was!

The bearings of this conviction didn't



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come to him all at once. The fact was as much as he could deal with. She had sat and been painted like this! His impressions were as poignant and confused as if he had seen her struck dead. He couldn't account for it. He couldn't explain the presence of the thing here in his mother's room.

On the lower bar of the frame he saw an inscription plate, getting down on all fours to read it. "Life and Death: by Hubert Wray."

So Hubert had done it; Hubert had seen her in this flinging-off of mystery. Of course!

His thought flashed back to the day when he had first made her acquaintance. Leaning a little forward, she was sitting in this very Byzantine chair, on this very dais, wearing a flowered dress, a flower-wreathed Leghorn hat in her lap. Wray, in a painting-smock, was standing with the palette and brushes in his hand, making a sketch of her more or less on the lines of a Reynolds or a Gainsborough. He had dropped him a line telling him he had taken a studio, and inviting him to look him up. He hadn't looked him up till a week or two had gone by, but having once seen this girl, he did so soon again.

Of him, she had taken little or no notice. When, later, he forced himself on her attention, she made his approaches difficult. When he asked her to marry him she had at first laughed him off, and then refused him in so many words. But as she generally based her refusal, unconsciously perhaps, on the social differences between them, he wouldn't take her "No" for an answer. If he could ignore the social differences, it seemed to him that she could, while the advantages to her in marrying a Collingham were evident.

"And all the while this is what the trouble was."

What he meant by *this* was more than the picture, "Life and Death," though how much more he made no attempt to measure. The truth that now emerged for him out of his memory of the winter months was that Wray loved Jennie, that Jennie loved Wray, and that he had been a blind fool never to have seen it.

He threw himself on his mother's couch, burying his face in the cushions.

As much as from anything else he suffered from the breakdown of his convictions. He had been so glib on the subject of his instinct. Love could make mistakes, he had said to Edith, but instinct couldn't. He had been the other half of Jennie; Jennie had been the other half of him. She couldn't be unfaithful to him, because he knew she couldn't. His love was protecting her like a magic cloak, while she was—The awful shame of a man whose foolish stammerings of passion are held up to public ridicule seemed to kill the heart in his body.

And yet, when he staggered to his feet and strode toward the obsessing thing to pull the cloth over it again, he started back once more. The woman with the skull had changed. She was a coarse creature now, common and sensual. Amazement pinned him to the spot, his hands raised as if at sight of an apparition. Then slowly, insensibly, weirdly, Jennie came back again, though not quite the Jennie he had seen at first. This Jennie retained the traits of the second woman—a Jennie coarsened, com-

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mon, and sensual, in spite of being exquisite, too.

He walked in and out of the other rooms on the floor, so as to clear his mind of the suggestion. When he came back, he saw the second woman, and the second woman only; but having moved into a new light, he found Jennie there as before. It was like sorcery. Whether the thing had a baleful life, or whether his perceptions were growing crazed, he couldn't tell.

Neither could he tell what he was to do with regard to the plans he had been making. A hotel in New York now—

But the immediate duties were evident. Nominally he had come back to befriend the boy, and the boy must be befriended. To do that he must have a knowledge of the facts. Further than this he had been unable to progress even by the hour, in the early afternoon, when he was limping along Indiana Avenue.

He had telephoned his coming, and Jennie had answered in a dead voice which could hardly be interpreted as a welcome. It was like a guilty voice, he said to himself, though he corrected the thought instantly, to argue in favor of emotion.

He had spent the intervening two or three hours arguing. Jennie was a model, and he must not be surprised if a model's work, however startling to one who was not a model, should seem a matter of course to her. All professions had peculiarities strange to those who didn't belong to them, and the model's perhaps most of all. He couldn't judge; he couldn't condemn. He must try to understand her from her own point of view. Probably her posing in this way seemed the most natural thing in the world to her; and, if so, he must make it seem the same to himself. He couldn't expect her to have the hesitations and circumspections of a girl from Marillo Park. If she was true to her own standards, it was all he had a right to look for.

And yet there was Wray. He had long seen in Hubert a fellow whom no girl could love "and get away with it." These were the words he had used of his friend, and he had considered the detail none of his business. Most men were that way, more or less, and if he himself wasn't, it was not a moral excellence but a trick of temperament. But that Jennie was in danger from Wray was a thought that never occurred to him. Her innocence and defenselessness, combined with what he had taken to be a kind of studio code of honor, would have been enough to protect her, even had his suspicions been roused, which they never were. He tried to smother those suspicions even now, saying to himself that he had nothing against her except that she had been a model—in all for which a model was ever called upon.

He had that—and the timbre of her voice on the telephone. There was dismay in that voice, and terror. If it wasn't a guilty voice—

But, as a matter of fact, it was a guilty voice. In an overwhelming consciousness of guilt, Jennie had spent the whole of the ten days since the coming of his cablegram. The man who at a distance of four or five thousand miles could know that Teddy was in jail and act so promptly for the good of all might be aware of anything. Having always seemed immense and overshadow-

ing, he became godlike now from his sheer display of power. It was power so great that she could put forth no claim; she could only wait humbly on his will.

As hidden behind a curtain she watched for his coming along the avenue, all her thoughts were focused into speculation as to how he would approach her. Would he be sorry for having married her? She could only fear that he would be. She had never mistrusted his mother's reading of his character—that he made love to girls one day and forgot them the next—in addition to which she had involved him in this terrible disgrace. Whatever excuse those who loved Teddy might make for him, the fact remained that to the world he was a bank-robber and a murderer. All his kin must share in the condemnation meted out to him, and Bob's first task as a married man must be that of defending her and hers against public disdain. He might be as brave as a lion in doing that, but, she reasoned, he couldn't like the necessity. He might say he did, and yet she wouldn't be able to believe him. Even if he still cared for her as he had cared when he went away, his marriage to her couldn't possibly be viewed otherwise than as a misfortune; and he might not still care for her.

She saw him as he limped round the corner at the very end of the street. He wore a Panama hat and a white-linen suit. Luckily, Gussie and Gladys had gone back to work, and her mother was lying down. She couldn't have borne the suspense had she not been all alone. Even Pansy's searching eyes, as she stood with her little squat legs planted wide apart, trying to understand this new element in the situation, were almost more than Jennie could endure.

Bob advanced slowly, examining the numbers of the houses, many of which were lacking. Seventeen, Fifteen, and Thirteen, were, however, over their doors, so that he was duly prepared for Eleven.

"I'll know by the first look in his eyes," she kept saying to herself, "whether he's sorry he married me or not."

As he passed number Thirteen she got up from the arm of the big chair on which she had been perched, and found she could hardly stand. It was all she could do to creep into the entry and open the front door. When he turned into the little cement strip leading up to it, she shrank back into the shadow. He was abreast of the two hydrangea trees before he saw her. When he did so he stood still. It seemed to her that an unreckonable time went by before a smile stole to his lips, and when it did it was wavering, flickering, more poignant than no smile at all.

Her inner comment was: "Yes; he's sorry. Now I know." Pride, another new force in her character, made of her a woman with a will, as she added, "I must help him to get out of it—somehow."

But Pansy, sensing a nimbus of good will as imperceptible to Jennie as the pervasive scent of the summer, lifted down the steps, raised her forepaws against his shin, and gazed up into his face adoringly.

This great novel is not only the best that Basil King has written, but it is one of the best that has ever been written—and one of the most important. The next instalment will appear in *September Cosmopolitan*.



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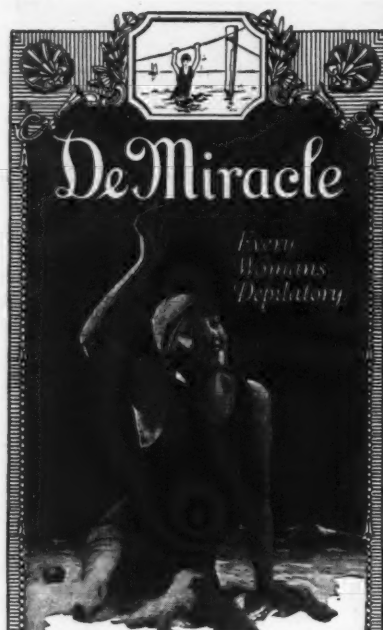
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The Good Little Bathing Girl

(Continued from page 64)

"Take this along with you and if the patient gets bored let him practise taking it apart and putting it together again. See how fast he can do it with both hands tied behind him."

"A' right," agreed Tony stolidly and cranked up the truck.

When it was gone the bandit chief produced a shovel from somewhere out of the darkness and proceeded to dump absorbent desert sand into the *arroyo*. When he judged that there was enough he wiped his feet carefully, climbed into the driver's seat, backed the car out of the *arroyo* and turned it around.

"Where to, lady?" he inquired briskly and politely.

"Home, please, James," she responded, successfully stifling her surprise.

"Right-o, Miss Bugg." He acknowledged the order by touching the brim of his hat.

It took her five miles to recover from that.

Then: "Would you mind wiping some of the dirt off your face," she requested, "and then telling me who you are?"

"Why, I'm the boy that used to work in the check room at the Fostoria Hotel in New York. But I began to lose my nerve and so I took up this road-agent work for awhile just to keep my hand in. It doesn't pay so well, but the hours are better."

They whizzed through Rivera and out once more into the starlit desert. Allis Reveur, alias Bugg, found herself inventing embarrassing questions merely for the pleasure of hearing the grimy-faced bandit make up nonsensical replies, and he, Clark Jennings, if he had had time to think about it, would have listened to himself in sheer amazement. Talking a blue streak to the most beautiful girl he ever saw and evidently getting away with it, to judge from the way she laughed contentedly at nearly everything he said! Surely he was succeeding in his purpose of distracting her attention from the nightmare of her troubles.

When Tony had driven the truck across thirty-five miles of bumpy road he decided that he had obeyed orders and stopped to release his prisoner.

But there was nothing in the body of the truck but the empty oil drums.

The prisoner, no longer such, was at that moment dictating a lengthy message to the railway telegraph operator at the tank ten miles back. The telegram was to the sheriff of Rivera.

Along towards two o'clock in the morning the driver of the high-powered roadster with a very tired girl dozing trustfully against his shoulder, felt his motor slow up a little on a steep and winding up-grade.

"Diabolo Pass," he muttered, "only about eighty miles to go."

But the motor slowed still more, slowed and sputtered, then came to a full stop. The car began to slip backward. He set the brakes.

"Whassa matter?" Allis demanded, half awake, then recollecting the situation, "Are we there?"

"Nope. Still here. And I'm afraid we're plumb out of gas. Excuse me a moment and I'll go look."

He was right the first time. There

wasn't a drop of gasoline in the tank or the vacuum system.

"There was a dinky town about six miles back," he recalled, "I'll have to walk there and get some gas."

"We might just as well stay here comfortably and wait for a car to come along."

"There won't be any now until daylight."

"That will be plenty soon enough."

"But what will people say about your being here alone all night with me?"

She regarded him quizzically, whimsically. "My dear, what people might say matters not one little bit to me. You've forgotten where I nearly spent this night."

"I can't see the difference."

"There is one. You want me to be good, don't you?"

"Why, yes."

"Well, you're the first man who ever did and I'm so glad I found one in time."

"I don't think I understand."

"Some day I'll explain it, if you ask me the right way. Now please come back where it's a little warmer and spread this rug over us, so, and if it won't make you too tired put your arm in back of me and let me rest my not very large head and my perfectly tremendous trust on your shoulder. Ah," she sighed, "Good night!"

"Good night" and after a long time he added quite under his breath, "dear," because it seemed the natural corollary.

Once, during the night she woke up with a sharp cry and pushed him away. Then, in the starlight, she looked at him. "Oh, it's you," she whispered. "I'm glad." And she nestled back into the hollow of his arm and lay there tranquilly.

The silence of the desert dawn was broken by the sound of a throbbing, distant motor.

At first Clark thought it was a mail-plane overhead and he moved his stiffened shoulders so that he could look up. The sky was bleak, gray and empty.

The throbbing persisted. He roused the girl.

"Car coming," he explained briefly. "Better take a look-see!"

They were on a short, banked turn in the pass, perhaps half-way to the summit. The twisting road below was fully visible from the edge.

At the beginning of the incline, its motor already beginning to bark protest at the grade through its cut-out, came an open automobile.

In it were seven men. They were carrying rifles.

"The sheriff," concluded Clark swiftly.

"And Duke Swift," added Allis. "I recognize his cap. What shall I do?"

"Wait a minute," counseled Clark, "we've got to think. And think pronto," he added.

She held her breath and watched him with head on one side as a terrier watches his master, expectantly.

There was a white, painted fence on the outside of the road. Clark went to it, tested its strength with a series of kicks until he found the weak spot.

Then he got into the car all by himself and released the brake. It started to glide backwards down hill. He guided it deftly toward the spot where he judged the fence would break, guided it to the very

edge and jumped just before it went through.

In a cloud of dust the automobile turned over and landed on a ledge ten feet below.

"Good, just right," Clark approved. "Now stick with me, kid." He held out his hand. She took it in hers and he drew her into the meager shelter of a scrub pine on the hillside.

"They won't look this way if they see the car," he comforted.

The pursuing automobile roared around the curve and came to a grinding halt just opposite the break in the fence.

"There's a car," shouted one of the men. "That's the one," declared Swift.

"Come on, boys," ordered the sheriff, "pile out. Keep your rifles cocked. He may shoot from underneath even if he's hurt."

"Don't harm the girl," pleaded Swift. "Don't touch the girl. She belongs to me."

Allis and Clark found time to grin at each other as the posse scrambled cautiously over the bank.

"Now," whispered Clark, as he pulled her to her feet.

Without opening the doors he climbed into the driver's seat of the sheriff's car and she flopped similarly into the tonneau. "Flat on the floor!" he ordered and let in the clutch. The motor had been left running and the exhaust, still open, let out a roar of power as the machine breasted the grade, gaining speed and power with every foot of the climb.

A shout of anger from behind them rose above the clamor of the motor and the explosion of rifles afforded a diminishing punctuation to their progress until after they had passed the summit and begun the descent on the Pacific side.

"You can come out now," invited Clark and the girl clambered over into the seat beside him. "How do you like your new car?"

"It's very nice," Allis admired, "and I hope it has lots of gasoline in its tummy."

"So do I. All we can do is hope."

Nobody cared about breakfast, nobody cared about anything but the glorious sunshine of the new day and the fact that for the moment there was nothing to interrupt their companionship, the first trusting, understanding friendship that either of them had ever known. They sang together, carefree, the songs that youth sings ever in the spring or even when it only seems slightly springy.

It was still early morning when they neared San Mareno, thirty miles out from Los Angeles. Clark, ever the more alert of the two, spied a dozen motor-cycles a mile away heading toward them. There were no other vehicles abroad and he sensed their errand.

He looked around for another manifestation of his goddess of luck. It was there. A train, Los Angeles bound, was pulling into the railroad station. He swerved the car to follow the tracks.

"Listen carefully," he admonished, "I can't take you any farther."

"I know. It's dangerous for you," she agreed sagely.

"Yes," he admitted. "So when I pass that train on the side away from the station, I'll slow up and you jump out. Board the train as she pulls out. Here's some money." He gave her a bill. "Good-by."

"Good-by."



What Would You Have Done?

MY husband was manager of one of the branch mills of a world-wide corporation and everybody said it was a wonderful position for so young a man. There was one great drawback, however—we had to live in a small mill-town which offered none of the advantages that we had both been used to. For most things we did not mind because we knew our next advancement would move us to a large city and for that we could wait.

One thing only could not wait—the education of our boy of 7 and our girl of 6. We knew the foundation they were now laying, the associations they were now making, the habits they were now forming, the teaching they were now getting would not wait and could never be made up for later—but what could we do? What would you have done?

It was with many misgivings, therefore, that I started Jim at the only local school accessible. I knew his teacher-to-be; one of the town girls, only a child herself, a product of the same school with only the commonest kind of a common school education and with little or no training or experience, and to think it was to such a person that I was going to turn over my boy to be educated!

It seemed like a joke, but as the year wore on it became more and more a serious one and the joke was on us. Jim was apparently learning nothing except bad language and behavior which was growing worse every day and I dreaded to think of sending our little girl into those same surroundings. His father tried to make the best of it by saying, "Oh, he's got to learn to rub up against all kinds and he'll come out all right," but I could see he was really as much worried as I.

One day Jim, Sr., returned from a trip to the Home Office in New York and as soon as he stepped inside the house I knew something had happened. He was to be transferred—I felt it.

"Mary," he shouted from the bottom of the steps. "Come here quickly, I've got it!"

"Got what?" I cried as I hurried down—"Are we going to move to New York?"

"Oh, no," he laughed—"nothing like that just yet—but something better—as far as the children are concerned. See this and this and this." He pulled some papers from his pocket and rapidly turned the pages.

"On the train," he explained breathlessly, "I met a man, bragging about his children—you know—the proud father kind—showed me their pictures—their school reports and all that, but what interested me most of all was a letter from his 7-year-old son—7 years old, mind you—Jim is 7 and think what sort of a letter he writes!—well, I had to admit the man had an infant prodigy—which, however, he vehemently denied—just an every-day normal child—he maintained—but—and this is the amazing thing—the boy had been taught by correspon-

dence through his mother—by correspondence! Do you get that?

"He was so enthusiastic about it I thought he must be a little crazy, but at any rate, to make a long story short, he got me so excited that I actually stopped off at Baltimore, where this school is located, to see for myself, for I was naturally still skeptical.

"I found there a great private day school—a Super-School—it has been called—that specializes in the education of young children. I had explained to me that its Trustees, public-spirited citizens who maintain the school in the cause of education without any financial benefit, either direct or indirect, had obtained such remarkable results with their day pupils that they had decided to extend its usefulness so that pupils no matter where located could share in its advantages and privileges."

I threw my arms around Jim's neck, thrilled by his enthusiasm. "Let's order the course at once," I said.

"It's ordered already!" he replied—"I couldn't wait. There's the outfit in my luggage!"

THAT was 5 years ago. Jim's promotion to the big city has at last come and we are now able to put both children in school, and what do you suppose the Principal said when I went to enter Jim? "What year of Calvert did you say he had finished?"

"The 6th," I answered.

"And has always had good reports?"

"Yes," I could truthfully answer.

"Well, then, he can enter our high school department." And he did—and what is more, he is leading his class!

The little girl did the same in her school, and although both children have spent their whole lives in a little mill-town, they have—thanks to the Calvert School, to whom they owe their entire education—a broader knowledge and culture than most of their metropolitan friends with all their advantages of libraries, museums, art galleries, etc., so that they at once took their place as leaders both in and out of school and have made just the friends we would wish.

Indeed, through our contact with the children's work we also have had what has been practically a post-graduate course ourselves, and though it has taken but little of our time it has brought new and delightful interests into our life also. It was a revelation to me what Calvert School was able to do for my children. Their progress has been phenomenal, and I would never have believed it possible.

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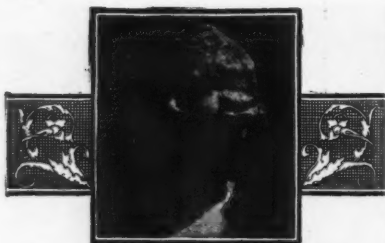
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He turned to look at her just for a mo-
ment. What her eyes said was a little
more than "good-by." So did his.

She smiled as she dropped off.

A few moments later from the car win-
dows she saw him drive up to meet a lot
of men on motor-cycles. He slowed down
and got out of the car.

The motor-cyclists were in uniform.
They were policemen.

"The fool," she said, "the dear, brave,
darling fool."

That was why she knew she would find
him in a police cell when she called at head-
quarters later in the day.

"I don't know whether you care about
seeing me when you get out of jail or not,"
she said shyly, counting with her fingers
the bars that separated them, "but if you
should—I'll be waiting for you, no matter
how long it takes."

If she had been looking anywhere except
at his feet she would have realized that
there was a lot of go in the old horse yet.
The light in his eyes nearly blinded a turn-
key in the next corridor.

"Do you think," he asked modestly,
"that you'd be waiting if I got out to-
morrow?"

"Don't be foolish."

"But does it go for to-morrow?"

"For any day and every day."

"Then I don't see any object in staying
here any longer. Where'll you be waiting?"

"Anywhere."

"On the steps of the Hall of Records at
two o'clock."

Of course it was only a joke on his part,
but she was there just the same, in a dark
tailored suit, not absolutely inappropriate
for travel if there was anywhere to go, and
looking very young and very slim and
wistful indeed.

She was gazing out toward the street so
she naturally didn't see him when he came
out of the building itself. He had to say,

Cosmopolitan for August, 1921

"Beg pardon, lady, you're standing on my
heart," before she turned in amazement.

"Probably it is you, but I don't believe
it," she told him incredulously. "Where
did you get the hat and the suit of clothes?"

"My tailor does not advertise, so I don't
feel at liberty to tell you," he replied.

"Where did you get the roses in your
cheeks, girl, and the tear mist in your eye?"

"And you're here and free?"

"As the mountain air."

"How did you get out?"

"Doggone it, here we have to start mar-
ried life with secrets from one another."

"Are we starting married life?"

"Sure. Didn't you know? That's why
I was in there getting a number plate at
the license bureau. They're yellow and
black this year and we each have—"

"If I marry you, will you tell me how you
got out?"

"Nope. The only person who can tell
you how I got out is Dukane Swift and I
don't think he ever will. I have a closed
car waiting to take us somewhere. Come
and get into it if you don't want your first
kiss from your future husband to be ap-
plied right in the heart of the city before
every man, woman and—"

He slammed the door of the car shut and
pulled down the shade.

In the most private recess of his club
Dukane Swift reread a scrap of paper
which had been handed to him by special
messenger that morning.

It said simply:

"If you withdraw your charge of lar-
ceny, highway robbery, piracy and what
not, I will instruct my legal adviser not to
lay before the prosecuting attorney the
facts in the case of your recent violation
of the Mann Act. Or perhaps you didn't
know that the place where I stopped your
car was over the state line into Arizona.
It was.

CLARK JENNINGS."

Hoodooed!

(Continued from page 97)

along the trail, often on our hands and
knees for yards at a time.

For eight hours we worked without even
a stop for lunch, sometimes swiftly and
carelessly, but most of the time crawling
cautiously in breathless anticipation of
the chance that never came. At three
o'clock, with miles of hard-going between
us and the open, we called it a day and
started for camp. Tired by the weight of
the .318 I handed it to the tracker and took
instead the little 6.5 Mannlicher which he
had been carrying since our start in the
early morning.

We had covered more than half the way
home when the guide who was walking
ahead stopped in his tracks with a curious
gasping not listed among the various warn-
ings to look out for game. I followed the direc-
tion of his startled gaze and saw just beside
the path and certainly not twenty paces
away something which looked like a huge
umbrella still glistening from use in a rain-
storm. It was a deep slate-blue in color,
marked with thin transverse stripes of
white. In the instant which told me it was a
bull inyala, feeding head-down, his tail just
free of the bush, delivered by the goddess
of fortune as though bound hand and foot
for slaughter, I threw off the safety catch

of the little rifle which at that distance
could pierce the big buck through and
through and raised it to my shoulder. The
long uneven chase was over, bar pulling
the trigger, when the tracker, convinced
that only the .318 could kill so large a
beast, broke every rule of his guild, seized
my wrist and dragged it away. With
frantic gesture he offered me the heavier
gun, oblivious of the fact that its sight was
down and its action locked. During the
silent and on my part furious struggle
which could not have lasted more than a
second, the inyala doe sounded an alarm
from the nearby thicket and the buck
whirled and plunged out of sight.

Rage has its limits as an emotion but
for a moment I weighed the inconveniences
inseparable from flagrant murder—involving
the abandonment of the still impending
hunting trip—against the pleasure of in-
flicting the supreme penalty. By the dazed
look in his eyes the boy expected to die
and was more than half disappointed when
I turned from him without a word and led
the way to camp at a pace which forced him
and the guide into a shuffling trot.

After such a sequence of disasters in
connection with the pursuit of inyala,
paralleling my ill luck of former years, it is

not surprising that the conviction should have grown on me that a hard and fast hoodoo was in the air as far as that particular species was concerned, and that it would be a waste of time to make any further effort toward breaking it. Consequently during the first four weeks in the Inhasune country I kept putting off heading toward Maoia's kraal which had been repeatedly described as an oasis of huts completely surrounded by inyala. This attitude did not prevent me, however, from bringing up the subject from time to time with Madada at the nightly indabas or during the less formal conversations of the lunch hour. On one such occasion the pressing needs of the Museum of Natural History were explained to him and he was asked if out of the abundance of inyala around his father's place he thought he could supply a live family.

"I understand," he began. "The *mulungu* fears that he will kill no inyala. Listen. Beyond those hills lies Maoia, my country."

The smile of a man remembering the hidden places of the farm of his boyhood lit up his shining black face; he raised his two arms into his characteristic gesture of one who draws an arrow to the head, his demeanor turned grave and with flashing eyes and snapping fingers he began to describe, with the minuteness of a map drawn to scale, every forest, bush, glade and water-hole of his father's broad domain. Smiling dreamily, he concluded his oration with these words,

"When we come to Maoia's country, we will take no guide, no *hanshi*, no Rungo; we will go alone, you and I and the gun."

So it was to be. One evening, returning from thirty-six hours on end in the bush with a mosquito-tormented night under a tree in a Kafir kraal sandwiched in between two marches of over twenty miles each, we found that Cass had moved his half of the camp to Maoia's, whither we followed on the next day.

Soon after our arrival Cass came in. He had crawled through a series of inyala thickets all the previous afternoon; in the morning he had started out a bit late and repeated the performance until five in the afternoon, when he sat down in a likely glade and waited for half an hour and then started, torn, tired and discouraged, for home. As he followed the path along the edge of the bush he came suddenly upon two bull inyala feeding heads down in the grass. He shot one of them through spine and shoulder, dropping it stone dead; the other stood and stared at him for several seconds before it whirled and rushed away. This had happened within a mile of camp, so near that we had heard the shot and known that it had been a hit.

Both dog-tired, we turned in early that night after a very brief indaba, as the only program for the next day was that Madada and I should go out and do likewise while Cass stayed in camp to superintend the careful skinning of his specimen.

I got up rather late, washed, ate and called for Madada. It was seven o'clock; the first light of dawn which would have offered us the best chance of finding the game in the open had long since passed and we could scarcely hope for anything

but hard work, belly to ground in the thorn thickets, through all the heat of the day.

Stripped of every incumbrance save a waterbottle and a single rifle the two of us started out, Madada carrying the gun until we should reach the hunting grounds. He led the way across a patch of burnt grass and struck into a path which meandered down through the stubble of a reaped corn-field. He walked swiftly, his bare heels twisting in with a jerk to the push of his strong stride. Watching his small feet as I had done for hour upon hour of many a day (a bad habit acquired through stepping where he stepped in passing over the crackling dry-leaf carpet of the temba forest) and wondering if ever the photographic image of their peculiar formation would fade from memory, I was suddenly aroused as one dragged out of a dream by the hair.

Madada was thrusting the gun at me with both hands. Over his shoulder I saw the careering form of a bull inyala making not for the bush but cutting across the open, tilled ground and looking for all the world like a fat man running to catch a train.

I seized the rifle, snapped back the sight-protector, put up the hundred-yard leaf, threw off the safety lock and still dropped him at a hundred and ten paces.

"*Quel Le madoda 'mculol* (Ah! the great male!)" grunted Madada, eyes, face and teeth welded into one beatific grin.

We gloated a little over the fallen beast, I because he had been so desired and was so fair to look upon and Madada because he was so good to eat. While the carcass was yet warm and pliable we made the necessary measurements for mounting purposes and even so were back in camp within forty minutes of having left it. Cass was still at breakfast and paid no heed to our arrival. Not having noticed the single shot (although he must have heard it) he thought we had merely returned to await the cool of the afternoon. I told him what had happened and we sauntered down to view the scene of battle.

Here is a note on the psycho-physical phenomena of shooting. We found that the spot from which the inyala had been killed was half surrounded by a clump of castor-bushes eight feet high and that the shot was fired through an aperture in the fronds not over eighteen inches square; nevertheless I had been totally unconscious at the time of any obstruction whatever between me and the running beast and during the survey made the discovery of the bushes with genuine astonishment. Another mystery: when the buck first took alarm he had been standing at the very edge of a dense thicket which bordered on the cornfield. This point, the spot where he fell and the stance from which the shot was fired formed an exact isosceles triangle of a hundred and ten paces to each leg. Why had he not whirled into the bush at his back? Why did he run into the open? Are inyala stupid, or bold, or shy? Are they hard to get or are they not? The last of these questions was put aloud, and remembering the violent contrast between the grueling work we both had done and the ease and suddenness of final achievement, Cass replied, "God knows."

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COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE

119 West 40th Street, Room A-1
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The Flower of the Flock

(Continued from page 78)

"Thet's right, Bud," said Lem mockingly. "Run erlong an' dry her purty tears. But I'm tellin' ye—" his tone grew ugly. "Once we bin married thet air job won't be yourn any more."

With despair in his heart David went to Essie.

"Don't cry," he said, finding her on the ground beside the seat. "Hit ain't too late yet."

"I'll never marry Lem," sobbed Essie. "Thar's still the Bride's Leap up yander."

Through the gloom came the bent figure of Maw Tolliver.

"I come away ter tell ye Lem's allowin' ter beat Dave hyar ter jelly ef Essie don't marry him when the preacher gits hyar," she informed her anxiously.

"Oh . . .!" moaned Essie. "Why don't somebuddy shoot Lem? He air too dog mean ter live!"

"I bin thinkin' o' thet ef nuthin' else turns up," admitted David.

"No, son," objected Maw. "I hain't figgerin' on ye doin' thet. Ye'd never be able ter git away from hit—an' thar'd be five o' them left. I'm aimin' on ye gittin' away with clean hands." A light came into her faded eyes almost fanatically confident. "Thar'll be a way . . ." she declared. And left them together.

"Thar's jest got ter be some way ter git them chillun free," she told herself, going back over the ploughed field, soft loam clinging to her feet, her warped shadow following, gnomelike. "Thar's jest got ter be some way . . ."

All during the long hours of the night she pondered over the problem. It haunted her during her early morning chores, demanding solution. But it was still unsolved when, staggering up the road late the next afternoon, bent under the weight of a pail of spring water, she was hailed by a stranger, a trim, citified stranger in riding-suit and boots.

"Let me carry that for you, auntie," he said pleasantly, dismounting from his horse.

Throwing the reins across one arm, he lifted the pail from her unwilling hand.

"It looks a bit too much for you," he protested.

"I'm stronger than whut I look," said Maw ungraciously.

In silence they walked a few paces, Maw scrutinizing him sharply from under her faded sunbonnet. Tall and lithe and blond . . . something like David. But not, she decided jealously, as sightly. David in that neat riding-suit and boots, and with a city hair-cut, would put the stranger to shame. Suddenly and passionately she wanted all those things for David which came so easily to this stranger as his birthright.

"Stranger, hain't ye?" she demanded.

"How did you guess it?" smiled the man good-naturedly.

Maw sniffed. "Men up in these hyar parts don't tote water fer wimmin folks," she said dryly. "'Ceptin' David."

"David?"

"My boy—the youngest of six. He's like you, Mister—tall an' blue-eyed."

A pause. The faded blue eyes darted to his face with senile cunning. "Mister, ef a mounting boy wuz ter git away from hyar an' git ter out yander would he be

able ter make his way? He—he kin read."

Her eagerness was pathetic. The stranger gave immediate and kind-hearted encouragement. "Any mountain boy with courage enough to get away to entirely new conditions could hardly help succeeding."

Maw drew a long sigh of relief. "Revenooer, hain't ye, Mister?" she inquired irrelevantly.

A brief silence. Then, influenced by some inexplicable impulse, he told her the truth. "Yes," he admitted. "But if there are any stills up this way they are too well hidden and the people are too close-mouthed for me to find them." He sighed. "It's my first trip out, and I hate going back empty-handed. I'd give something handsome to find even one still."

"Folks up this way air sartin sure close-mouthed," agreed Maw. The flash of senile cunning flickered again in her old eyes. "Ef ye air huntin' stills an' I know whar ye mought find one, mebbe we mought be makin' a trade, Mister."

"You mean?" he stopped short in amazement, water slopping over his boots.

"Whut's it worth ter ye, Mister, ter find a still?"

"Twenty-five dollars," he hazarded, watching her closely.

"Tain't enough," hesitated Maw disappointedly. "Mister, I want ter git my boy away from hyar. I got reasons. An' thar's a mighty purty wild rose in my cabin I'm wantin' ter git away with him. Twenty-five dollars hain't enough."

"One hundred," said the revenue officer eagerly, putting down the pail of water, and wondering at his own folly. "But how do I know your information would be reliable?"

Maw straightened with a curious dignity. "My word air good, stranger."

"I'll take a chance," he decided, producing a handsome leather wallet. "I've got a record to establish."

"Ye go up this road 'til ye come ter a fork," directed Maw through dry lips. "Then ye go left 'til ye come ter a ravine. Up that ravine thar air three big pines—" she choked over her disloyalty to the code of the mountaineer.

"I can find it," said the revenue officer gently, after an awkward wait.

"Thar'll be six men thar," she cautioned. "Mister, ef a single one of them wuz ter git away—"

"I understand. I'll take plenty of men with me."

Maw reached forward, lifting the pail of water. "You go your ways, Mister, an' I'll go mine. Tain't healthy round these parts ter go associatin' with revenooers."

Mounting, he rode on up the road, Maw staring unhappily after him.

"Six big Tollivers gone ter pot!" she said aloud unsteadily. And, hobbling home with the pail of water, it seemed to her she was pursued by a procession of phantom Tollivers of all ages, babies, boys, bearded men. . . .

Pausing at the field, she called to David, working dejectedly with the old horse. "Perk up, boy, I've got news fer ye," she said exultantly. "Hyar—" she thrust at him a limp roll of bills. "Termorter

mornin' at sunup I want ye sh'd take Essie an' start fer the settlemint. When ye reach the settlemint hire old Ed Stoneman ter druv ye ter the county seat. From thar ye kin git a train somewheres . . ." her tone took on a quaint wistfulness. "I hain't never seed a train," she sighed. Then; "Ye kin marry Essie at the settlemint," she finished.

"Whar'd ye git it, Maw?" questioned the bewildered David.

Mar flushed angrily. "I sold the one thing whut I had ter sell." Then, more gently. "Never mind whar I got it, Boy. Ye do whut I bid. I'll tell Lem I sent Essie ter the mill, an' you huntin' birds. . . ."

"But you?" hesitated the boy. "An' Lem'll foller us."

Her throat contracted. "Mebbe not," she disputed. "He won't suspicion afore night anyways. An' hit's yore only chance. With the money ye kin git away."

Leaving him to the excitement of rising hope, she went up to the cabin to begin preparations for the next meal, the old familiar passing from fireplace to table.

And presently they filed in, six tall, dark, bearded Tollivers in heavy boots, then David in his young blondness, and last of all, Essie, shrinking past Lem's chair hurriedly.

"Howdy, sweetness!" greeted Lem with a guffaw. "Better be gittin' yore weddin' clothes out. Preacher'll be hyar day after tomorrow. I sent him word. So you an' Maw better be gittin' at the cookin'. We boys air goin' up ter the still afore sunup ter git enough moonshine."

Involuntarily Maw's faded eyes met young David's.

"Better stay clear of the still," cautioned David, wondering at the sudden pallor of Maw's pinched face.

"Hain't no danger," gibed Lem carelessly. "Nobuddy's goin' ter find that still less'n somebuddy tips them off. An' that wouldn't be healthy."

"Ef ever they found us they wouldn't be takin' us alive, noways," contributed Pap, chewing vigorously. "Tollivers whut hev bin used ter the freedom o' the mountings hain't never goin' ter rust away in jail."

Her face a smother of tears, Maw groped her way to the porch, standing there against a post, both hands wrapped in the checked apron, faded eyes out upon the drowsy peace of the country. Over the summit of the farther slope a new moon was rising.

"Six big Tollivers cut down fer the littlest one of all!" she gasped unsteadily rocking back and forth on her rheumatic feet. "But young Dave—he air the flower of the flock!"

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The Pride of Palomar

Continued from page 102

"All a power company requires is the assurance that this dam you are building will impound in the Agua Caliente basin during an ordinarily wet winter, sufficient run-off water to insure them against a shortage during the summer. After the water has passed over their wheels they're through with it and it can be used for irrigation, can it not?"

"Yes, of course, although you'd have to have a greater volume of water than the amount coming through the power company's pen-stocks. But that's easily arranged. Two ditches, Miguel."

"If the engineer of the Central California Power Company had not examined the possibilities here and approved of them, it is reasonable to suppose that he would not have drawn the plans and Parker would not have engaged you to build the dam."

"You're on the target, son. Go on."

"Then Parker must have entered into an agreement to sell, and the Central California Power Company must have agreed to buy, if and when Parker could secure legal title to the Rancho Palomar, a certain number of miner's inches of water daily, in perpetuity, together with certain lands for a power station and a perpetual right of way for their power lines over the lands of this ranch."

"In the absence of conclusive proof to the contrary, Bill, I am convinced that John Parker did enter into such a contract, Naturally, until he should secure title to the ranch, the railroad commission, which regulates all public service corporations in this state, would not grant the power company permission to gamble on the truth of an official report that I had been killed in Siberia."

"Your reasoning is sound. Now eat, and after breakfast I'll tell you things. Your visit and your eager inquiries have started a train of thought in my thick head."

Don Mike obeyed, and while he devoted himself to his breakfast, old Bill Conway amused himself rolling pellets out of bread and flipping them at a knot-hole in the rough wall of the mess-hall.

"You've been pretty well troubled, haven't you, son?" he remarked paternally when Don Mike, having completed his meal, sat back and commenced rolling a cigarette.

"Si. Got your train of thought ditched, Bill?"

"I have. Assuming that Parker has made a deal with the Central California Power Company, what I want to know is: Why did he do it?"

"I've just told you why he did it."

"You've just told me why he would make a deal with a power company, but you haven't explained why he should make a deal with this particular power company."

"I cannot answer that question, Bill."

"Nor can I. But there's a reason—perhaps two reasons. Territorially, this power site is the natural property of but two power corporations—the Central California and the South Coast. The South Coast is the second largest corporation of its kind in the state; the Central California is the fifth. Why go gunning for

a dickey bird when you can tie up to an eagle?"

They were both silent, pondering the question. Then said Bill Conway, "Well, son, if I had as much curiosity regarding the reason for this situation as you have, I'd most certainly spend some money to find out."

"I have the money and I am prepared to spend it. How would you start, Bill?"

"Well, I'd buy a couple of shares of stock in the Central California Power Company as a starter. Then I would descend upon the main office of the company, exhibit my stock and claim my stockholder's right to look over the list of stockholders and bondholders of record; also, the board of directors and the minutes of the previous meetings. You may not find John Parker's name listed either as stockholder, bondholder or director, but you might find the First National Bank of El Toro, represented by the cashier or the first vice-president of that institution. Also, if I were you, I'd just naturally hop the rattler for San Francisco, hie myself to some stockbroker's office to buy this stock, and while buying it look over the daily reports of the stock market for the past few years and see if the figures suggested anything to me."

"Anything else?"

"Thus endeth the first lesson, Miguel. At that it's only a vague suspicion. Get out of my way, boy. I'm going out to build a dam and you're not ready to stop me—yet."

"Bill, I'm serious about this. I want you to cease operations."

Bill Conway turned upon him almost angrily. "What for?" he demanded.

"I own the Rancho Palomar. I forbid it. I have a good and sufficient reason."

"But, son, I can finance the confounded dam. I have it financed already."

"So have I—if I cared to accept favors."

Bill Conway approached and took his young friend by each shoulder. "Son," he pleaded, "please let me build this dam. I was never so plumb interested in any job before. I'll take a chance. I know what I'm going to do and how I'm going to do it, and you aren't going to be obligated the least little bit. Isn't John Parker stuck for it all, in the long run? Why, I've got that *hombre* by the short hair."

"I know, but long before you can collect from him you'll be financially embarrassed."

"Don't worry. I've been a miser all my life and I've got a lot of money hid out. Please, son, quit interfering with me. You asked me to help you out, I accepted and I'm going to go through until stopped by legal procedure. And if you have the law on me I'll never speak to you again."

"Your attitude doesn't fit in with my plans, Bill Conway."

"Yours don't fit in with mine. Besides, I'm older than you and if there was one thing your father taught you it was respect for your elders. Two heads are better than one. You crack right along and try to save your ranch in your way and I'll crack right along and try to save it my way. You pay your way and I'll pay mine. That's fair, isn't it?"

"Yes, but—"

"Fiddlesticks; on your way. You're wasting your breath arguing with me."

Don Mike knew it. "Well, let me have a set of the plans," he concluded sulkily.

Bill Conway handed him out a roll of blue-prints and Farrel mounted Panchito and returned to the hacienda. The blue-prints he hid in the barn before presenting himself at the house. He knew his absence from the breakfast-table would not be commented upon, because for a week, during the round-up of the cattle, he and Pablo and the latter's male relatives who helped in the riding, had left the hacienda at daylight after partaking of a four o'clock breakfast.

"We've been waiting for you, Miguel, to motor with us to El Toro," Kay greeted him as he entered the patio.

"I've been over to Bill Conway's camp to tell him to quit work on that dam."

The girl paled slightly and a look of apprehension crept into her eyes. "And—and—he's—ceasing operations?" she almost quavered.

"He is not. He defied me, confound him, and in the end I had to let him have his way."

El Mono, the butler, interrupted them by appearing on the porch to announce that William waited in the car without. Mrs. Parker presently appeared, followed by her husband, and the four entered the waiting car.

"I know another route to El Toro," he confided to the Parkers as the car sped down the valley. "It's about twelve miles out of our way, but it is an inspiring drive. The road runs along the side of the high hills, with a parallel range of mountains to the east and the low foothills and flat farming lands sloping gradually west to the Pacific Ocean. At one point we can look down into La Questa Valley and it's beautiful."

"Let us try that route, by all means," John Parker suggested. "I have been curious to see La Questa Valley and observe the agricultural methods of the Japanese farmers there."

"I am desirous of seeing it again for the same reason, sir," Farrell replied. "Five years ago there wasn't a Jap in that valley and now I understand it is a little Japan."

"By the way, sir," Farrell spoke suddenly, turning to John Parker. "I would like very much to have your advice in the matter of an investment. I will have about ninety thousand dollars on hand as soon as I sell these cattle I've rounded up, and until I can add to this sum sufficient to lift the mortgage you hold, it scarcely seems prudent to permit my funds to repose in the First National Bank of El Toro without drawing interest."

"We'll give you two and one-half per cent. on the account, Farrel."

"Not enough. I want it to earn six or seven per cent. and it occurred to me that I might invest it in some good securities which I would dispose of at a moment's notice, whenever I needed the money. The possibility of a profit on the deal has even occurred to me."

Parker smiled humorously. "And you come to me for advice? Why, boy, I'm your financial enemy."

"My dear Mr. Parker, I am unalterably opposed to you on the Japanese colonization scheme and I shall do my best to rob you of the profit you plan to

make at my expense, but personally I find you a singularly agreeable man. I know you will never resign a business advantage, but on the other hand, I think that if I ask you for advice as to a profitable investment for my pitiful little fortune, you will not be base enough to advise me to my financial detriment. I trust you. Am I not banking with your bank?"

"Thank you, Farrel, for that vote of confidence. You possess a truly sporting attitude in business affairs and I like you for it; I like any man who can take his beating and smile. Yes, I am willing to advise an investment. I know of a dozen splendid securities that I can conscientiously recommend as a safe investment, although, in the event of the inevitable settlement that must follow the war and our national orgy of extravagance and high prices, I advise you frankly to wait a while before taking on any securities. You can not afford to absorb the inevitable shrinkage in the values of all commodities when the show-down comes. However, there is a new issue of South Coast Power Company first mortgage bonds that can be bought now to yield eight per cent. and I should be very much inclined to take a chance on them, Farrel. The debentures of the power corporations in this state are about the best I know of."

"I think you are quite right, sir," Farrel agreed. "Eventually the South Coast Company is bound to divide with the Pacific Company control of the power business of the state. I dare say that in the fullness of time the South Coast people will arrange a merger with the Central California Power Company."

"Perhaps. The Central California Company is under-financed and not particularly well managed, Farrel. I think it is, potentially, an excellent property, but its bonds have been rather depressed for a long time."

Farrel nodded his understanding. "Thank you for your advice, sir. When I am ready will your bank be good enough to arrange the purchase of the South Coast bonds for me?"

"Certainly. Happy to oblige you, Farrel. But do not be in too great a hurry. You may lose more in the shrinkages of values if you buy now than you would make in interest."

"I shall be guided by your advice, sir. You are very kind."

"By the way," Parker continued, with a deprecatory smile, "I haven't entered suit against you in the matter of that foreclosure. I didn't desire to annoy you while you were in hospital and you've been busy on the range ever since. When can I induce you to submit to a process-server?"

"This afternoon will suit me, Mr. Parker."

"I'll gladly wait a while longer, if you can give me any tangible assurance of your ability to meet the mortgage."

"I cannot do that to-day, sir, although I may be able to do so if you will defer action for three days."

Parker nodded and the conversation languished. The car had climbed out of the San Gregorio and was mounting swiftly along the route to La Questa, affording to the Parkers a panorama of mountain, hill, valley and sea so startling in its vastness and its rugged beauty that Don Mike realized his guests had been silenced as



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much by awe as by their desire to avoid a painful and unprofitable conversation.

Suddenly they swung wide around a turn and saw, two thousand feet below them, La Questa Valley. The chauffeur parked the car on the outside of the turn to give his passengers a long, unobstructed view.

"Looks like a green checker-board with tiny squares," Parker remarked presently.

"Little Japanese farms."

"There must be a thousand of them, Farrel."

"That means not less than five thousand Japanese, Mr. Parker. It means that literally a slice of Japan has been transplanted in La Questa Valley, perhaps the fairest and most fruitful valley in the fairest and most fruitful state in the fairest and most fruitful country God ever made. And it is lost to white men!"

"Serves them right. Why didn't they retain their lands?"

"Why doesn't water run up hill? A few Japs came in and leased or bought lands long before we Californians suspected a "yellow peril." They paid good prices to inefficient white farmers who were glad to get out at a price in excess of what any white man could afford to pay. After we passed our land law in 1913, white men continued to buy the lands for a corporation owned by Japanese with white dummy directors, or a majority of the stock of the corporation ostensibly owned by white men. Thousands of patriotic Californians have sold their farms to Japanese without knowing it. The law provides that a Japanese cannot lease land longer than three years, so when their leases expire they conform to our foolish law by merely shifting the tenants from one farm to another. Eventually so many Japs settled in the valley that the white farmers, unable to secure white labor, unable to trust Japanese labor, unable to endure Japanese neighbors or to enter into Japanese social life, weary of paying taxes to support schools for the education of Japanese children, weary of daily contact with irritable, unreliable and unassimilable aliens, sold or leased their farms in order to escape into a white neighborhood. I presume, Mr. Parker, that nobody can realize the impossibility of withstanding this yellow flood except those who have been overwhelmed by it. We humanitarians of a later day gaze with gentle sympathy upon the spectacle of a noble and primeval race like the Iroquois tribe of Indians dying before the advance of our Anglo-Saxon civilization, but with characteristic Anglo-Saxon inconsistency and stupidity we are quite loth to feel sorry for ourselves, doomed to death before the advance of a Mongolian civilization unless we put a stop to it—forcibly and immediately!"

"Let us go down and see for ourselves," Mrs. Parker suggested.
Having reached the floor of the valley, at Farrel's suggestion they drove up one side of it and down the other. Motor-truck after motor-truck, laden with crated vegetables passed them on the road, each truck driven by a Japafese, some of them wearing the peculiar bamboo hats of the Japanese coolie class.

The valley was given over to vegetable farming and the fields were dotted with men, women and children, squatting on their heels between the rows or bending

over them in an attitude which they seemed able to maintain indefinitely, but which would have broken the back of a white man.

"I know a white apologist for the Japanese who in a million pamphlets and from a thousand rostrums has cried that it is false that Japanese women labor in the fields," Farrel told his guests. "You have seen a thousand of them laboring in this valley. Hundreds of them carry babies on their backs or set them to sleep on a gunnysack between the rows of vegetables. There is a sixteen year old girl struggling with a one-horse cultivator, while her sisters and her mother hold up their end with five male Japs in the gentle art of hoeing potatoes."

"They live in wretched little houses," Kay ventured to remark.

"Anything that will shelter a horse or a chicken is a palace to a Jap, Kay. The furnishings of their houses are few and crude. They rise in the morning, eat, labor, eat, and retire to sleep against another day of toil. They are all growing rich in this valley, but have you seen one of these aliens building a decent home, or laying out a flower garden? Do you see anything inspiring or elevating to our nation due to the influence of such a race?"

"So you do not believe it possible for a white man to compete economically with these people, Farrel?"

"Would you, if you were a white farmer, care to compete with the Japanese farmers of this valley? Would you care to live in a rough board shack, subsist largely on rice, labor from daylight to dark and force your wife and daughter to labor with you in the fields? Would you care to live in a kennel and never read a book or take an interest in public affairs or thrill at a sunset or consider that you really ought to contribute a dollar toward starving childhood in Europe? Would you?"

Parker chuckled at this outburst and Kay prodded him with her elbow—a warning prod. The conversation languished immediately. Don Mike sat staring out upon the little green farms and the little brown men and women who toiled on them.

"Angry, Don Mike?" the girl asked presently. He bent upon her a glance of infinite sadness.

"No, my dear girl, just feeling a little depressed. It's hard for a man who loves his country so well he would gladly die a thousand dreadful deaths for it, to have to fight the disloyal thought that perhaps, after all, it isn't really worth fighting for and dying for. If we only had the courage and the foresight and the firmness of the Australians and New Zealanders! Why, Kay, those sane people will not even permit an Indian prince—a British subject, forsooth—to enter their country except under bond and then for six months only. When the six months have expired—*heraus mit em!* You couldn't find a Jap in Australia, with a search warrant. But do you hear any Japanese threats of war against Australia for this alleged insult to her national honor? You do not. They save that bunkum for pussy-footing, peace-loving, backward-looking, dollar-worshipping Americans. As a nation we do not wish to be awakened from our complacency, and the old theory that a prophet is without honor in his own country is a true one. So perhaps it would be well if we discuss something else—luncheon, for

instance. Attention! Silence in the ranks! Here we are at the Hotel De Las Rosas."

Having dined his guests, Farrel excused himself, strolled over to the railroad station and arranged with the agent for cattle cars to be spotted in on the siding close to town three days later. From the station he repaired to the office of his father's old attorney, where he was closeted some fifteen minutes, after which he returned to his guests, awaiting his return on the wide hotel veranda.

"Have you completed your business?" Parker inquired.

"Yes, sir, I have. I have also completed some of yours. Coming away from the office of my attorney, I noticed the office of your attorney right across the hall, so I dropped in and accepted service of the complaint in action for the foreclosure of your confounded old mortgage. This time your suit is going to stick! Furthermore, as I jogged down Main Street, I met Judge Morton, of the Superior Court, and made him promise that if the suit should be filed this afternoon he would take it up on his calendar to-morrow morning and render a judgment in your favor."

"By George," Parker declared, apparently puzzled, "one gathers the impression that you relish parting with your patrimony when you actually speed the date of departure."

Mrs. Parker took Don Mike by the lapel of his coat. "You have a secret," she charged.

He shook his head.

"You have," Kay challenged. "The intuition of two women cannot be gained."

Farrel took each lady by the arm and with high, mincing steps, simulating the utmost caution in his advance, he led them a little way down the veranda out of hearing of the husband and father.

"It isn't a secret," he whispered, "because a secret is something which one has a strong desire to conceal. However, I do not in the least mind telling you the cause of the O-be-joyful look that has aroused your curiosity. Please lower your heads and incline your best ears toward me."

There! I rejoice because I have the shaggy old wolf of Wall Street, more familiarly known as John Parker, beaten at his favorite indoor sport of high and lofty finance. 'Tis sad, but true. The old boy's a gone fawn. 'Le roi est mort! Vive le roi!'"

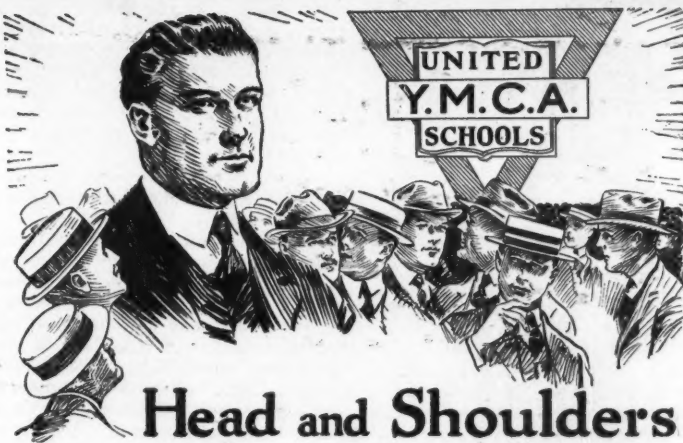
Kay's eyes danced. "Really, Miguel?"

"Not really or actually, Kay, but—er—morally certain."

"Oh!" There was disappointment in her voice. Her mother was looking at Don Mike, sharply, shrewdly, but she said nothing, and Farrel had a feeling that his big moment had fallen rather flat.

"How soon will John be called upon to bow his head and take the blow?" Mrs. Parker finally asked. "Much as I sympathize with you, Miguel, I dislike the thought of John hanging in suspense, as it were."

"Oh, I haven't quite made up my mind," he replied. "I could do it within three days, I think, but why rush the execution? Three months hence will be ample time. You see," he confided, "I like you all so well that I plan to delay action for six months or a year, unless, of course, you are anxious for an excuse to leave the



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ranch sooner. If you really want to go as soon as possible, of course I'll get busy and cook Señor Parker's goose, but—"

"You're incorrigible!" the lady declared. "Procrastinate, by all means. It would be very lonely for you without us, I'm sure."

"Indeed, it would be. That portion of me which is Irish would picture my old hacienda alive at night with ghosts and banshees."

Mrs. Parker was looking at him thoughtfully; seemingly she was not listening. What she really was doing was saying to herself: "What marvelous teeth he has and what an altogether *debonair*, captivating young rascal he is, to be sure! I cannot understand why he doesn't melt John's business heart. Can it be that under that gay, smiling, lovable surface John sees something he doesn't quite like? I wonder!"

As they entered the waiting automobile and started for home, Farrel, who occupied the front seat with the chauffeur, turned and faced the Parkers. "From this day forward," he promised them, "we are all going to devote ourselves to the serious task of enjoying life to the utmost. For my part, I am not going to talk business or Japanese immigration any more. Are you all grateful?"

"We are," they cried in unison.

He thanked them with his mirthful eyes, faced around in his seat and, staring straight ahead, was soon lost in day dreams. John Parker and his wife exchanged glances, then both looked at their daughter, seated between them. She, too, was building castles in Spain!

When they alighted from the car before the hacienda, Mrs. Parker lingered until the patio gate had closed on her daughter and Farrel; then she drew her husband down beside her on the bench under the catalpa tree.

"John, Miguel Farrel says he has you beaten."

"I hope so, dear," he replied feelingly.

"I know of but one way out for that young man, and if he has discovered it so readily I'd be a poor sport indeed not to enjoy his victory."

"You never really meant to take his ranch away from him, did you, John?"

"I did, Kate. I do. If I win, my victory will prove to my entire satisfaction that Don Miguel Jose Federico Noriaga Farrel is a throwback to the *Mañana* family, and in that event, my dear, we will not want him in ours. We ought to improve our blood-lines, not deteriorate them."

"Yet you would have sold this valley to that creature Okada."

"Farrel has convinced me of my error there. I have been anti-Jap since the day Farrel was thrown from his horse and almost killed—by a Jap."

"I'm sure Kay is in love with him, John."

"Perhaps. We'll decide that point later. Do you think Farrel is interested in Kay?"

"I do not know, John," his better half declared hopelessly. "If he is, he possesses the ability to conceal it admirably."

"I'll bet he's a good poker-player. He has you guessing, old girl, and the man who does that is a *rara avis*. However, Katie dear, if I were you I wouldn't worry about this—er—affair."

"But I don't want Kay to fall in love with Don Mike if he isn't going to fall in love with her," she protested, in her earnestness raising her voice, as was frequently her habit.

The patio gate-latch clicked and Pablo Artelan stood in the aperture.

"Señora," he said gravely, "Ef I am you I don't worry very much about those boy. Before hees pretty partecular. All those hightone *señorita* in El Toro she give it the sweet look to Don Miguel, jus' the same like thees—" Here Pablo relaxed his old body, permitted his head to loll sideways and his lower jaw to hang slackly, the while his bloodshot eyes gazed amorously into the branches of the catalpa tree. "But those boy he don' pay some attention. Hes give beeg smile to thees *señorita*, beeg smile to thees one, beeg smile to that one, beeg smile for all the mama, but for the *querida* I tell to you Don Miguel hees pretty partecular. I theenk to myself—Carolina, too. 'Look here, Pablo. What he is the matter weeth those boy? I theenk maybeso those boy she's goin' be old bach. What's the matter here? When I am twenty-eight años my oldes' boy already hees bust one bronco.'" Here Pablo paused to scratch his head. "But now," he resumed, "by the blood of those devil I know some-theeng!"

"What do you know, you squidgy-nosed old idol, you?" Parker demanded, with difficulty repressing his laughter.

"I am ol' man," Pablo answered with just the correct shade of deprecation, "but long time ago I have feel like my *corazon*—my heart—goin' make barbecue in my belly. I am in love. I know. Nobody can fool me. An' those boy, Don Miguel, I tell you, *señor*, hees crazy for love with the *Señorita Kay*."

Parker crooked his finger, and in obedience to the summons Pablo approached the bench.

"How do you know, all this, Pablo?"

Let us here pause and consider. In the summer of 1769 a dashing, care-free Catalonian soldier in the company of Don Gaspar de Portola, while swashbuckling his way around the lonely shores of San Diego Bay, had encountered a comely young squaw. *Mira, señores!* Of the blood that flowed in the veins of Pablo Artelan, thirty-one-thirty-seconds was Indian, but the other one-thirty-second was composed of equal parts of Latin romance and conceit.

Pablo's great moment had arrived. Lowly peon that he was, he knew himself at this moment to be a most important personage; death would have been preferable to the weakness of having failed to take advantage of it.

"Why I know, Señor Parker?" Pablo laughed briefly, lightly, mirthlessly, his cachinnation carefully designed to convey the impression that he considered the question extremely superfluous.

He answered his own question. "Well, *señor*—and you, *señora!* I tell you. *Por nada*—forgive, please, I speak the Spanish—for notheeng, those boy he poke weeth hees thumb the rib of me."

"No?" cried John Parker, feigning profound amazement.

"*Es verdad*. Eet is true, *señor*. Those boy hees happy, no? Eh?"

"Apparently."

"You bet you my life. Well, las' night

those boy hees; peench weeth hee; thumb an' thees fingair—what you suppose?"

"I give it up, Pablo."

Pablo wiped away with a saddle-colored paw a benignant and paternal smile. He wagged his head and scuffed his heel in the dirt. He feasted his soul on the sensation that was his.

"Those boy hees peench—" a dramatic pause. Then: "Ef you tell to Don Miguel those things I tol' you—*Santa Maria!* Hees cut my throat."

"We will respect your confidence, Pablo," Mrs. Parker hastened to assure the traitor.

"He peench—" Pablo's voice rose to a pseudo-feminine screech—"the cheen of—" he whirled upon Mrs. Parker and transfixed her with a tobacco-stained index finger—"Señorita Parker, so help me, by Jiminy, eef I tell you some lies I hope I die pretty queeck."

Both the Parkers stared at the old man blankly. He continued:

"He peench—queeck—like that. He don' know hees goin' for peench—hees all time queeck like that—he don' theenk. But after those boy hees peench the cheen of those girl, hees get red in the face like blackbird's weeng. 'Oh,' he say, 'I am sky-blue eedee-ot,' an' he run away queeck before he forget heemself an' peench those girl some more."

John Parker turned gravely to his wife. "Old hon," he murmured softly, "Don Mike Farrel is a pinch-bug. He pinched Kay's chin during a mental lapse; then he remembered he was still under my thumb and he cursed himself for a sky-blue idiot."

"Oh, John, dear, I'm so glad." There were tears in Mrs. Parker's eyes. "Aren't you, John?"

"No, I'm not," he replied savagely. "I think it's an outrage and I'd speak to Farrel about it if it were not apparent nobody realizes more keenly than does he the utter impossibility of permitting his fancy to wander in that direction."

"John Parker, you're a hard-hearted man," she cried, and left him in high dudgeon, to disappear into the garden. As the gate closed behind her, John Parker drew forth his pocketbook and abstracted from it a hundred-dollar bill, which he handed to Pablo Artelan.

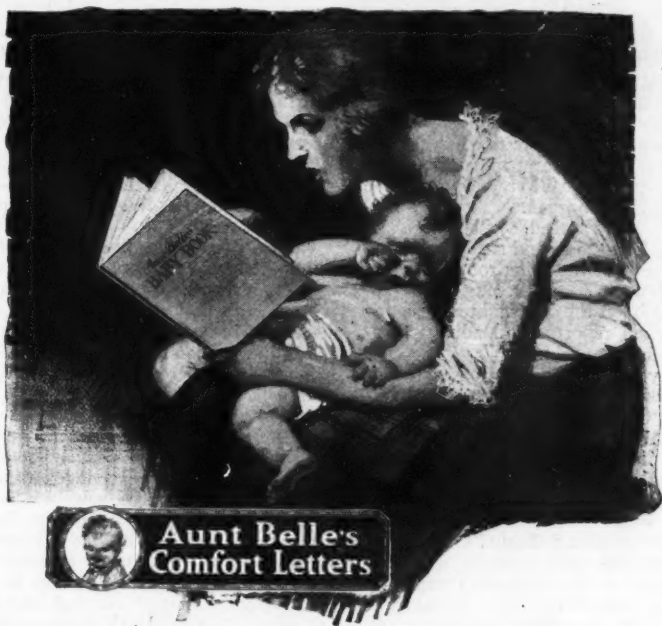
"We have had our little differences, Pablo," he informed that astounded individual, "but we're gradually working around toward a true spirit of brotherly love. In the language of the classic, Pablo, I'm here to tell the cock-eyed world that you're one good Indian."

Pablo swept his old sombrero to the ground. "*Gracias, señor, mille gracias.*" he murmured, and shuffled away with his prize.

Verily, the ways of this Gringo were many and mysterious. To-day one hated him; to-morrow—

"There is no doubt about it," Pablo soliloquized, "it is better to be the head of a mouse than the tail of a lion!"

In this fascinating romance the author, Peter B. Kyne, is giving a true picture of the Japanese problem as it is seen at close range by Californians to-day. Do not miss the next instalment—in
September Cosmopolitan.



Aunt Belle's
Comfort Letters

Why The Mennen Company Published My Baby Book

DEAR ANNE:

I wish I could tell you how glorious I feel about my Baby Book, which The Mennen Company published for me last Spring. It's simply wonderful the way doctors and nurses and mothers are using it and praising it—*thousands* of them!

You know, all my life I have been using Mennen Borated Talcum in my baby work—on my own skin, too, for that matter. It has always seemed just the least bit safer than anything else. It's what I call a perfectly *balanced* talcum—the proper ingredients and the right amounts, so as to be antiseptic and soothing. I believe that is the real secret of its great success on baby's petal-like skin.

And then, when The Mennen Company introduced Kora-Konia I found something I had wanted for years. It really does give "quick relief" to an irritated skin—*wonderful* for chafing and prickly heat and similar afflictions. But what pleased me most is the way it soothes a poor little infant's skin suffering from diaper rash or scalding caused by involuntary habit.

I suppose it was because of wide experience with babies in my clinical work that The Mennen Company asked me to write my Baby Book. I may have been flattered a bit, but I did see a big chance to help the greatest number of mothers in times of distress.

I hope you will tell all your mother friends to write for their copies. It's the kind of book they would ordinarily pay a dollar for. But because I have mentioned Mennen Talcum a few times, The Mennen Company is mailing it for twenty-five cents as long as the edition lasts. It comes in a plain wrapper.

Lovingly,
BELLE

THE MENNEN COMPANY
NEWARK, N. J. U. S. A.



THE MENNEN CO., LTD., MONTREAL, QUEBEC

Aunt Belle's First Aids

An important part of Aunt Belle's Book is her Alphabetical First Aid Section—1-minute paragraphs on such troubles as the following:

Aches
Bruises
Burns
Colds
Colic
Constipation
Convulsions
Diarrhea
Eczema
Fever
Hives
Indigestion
Nosebleed
Poisoning
Prickly Heat
Rashes
Sore Throat
Vomiting



The Coward

(Concluded from page 81)

"Bad?" Brenton echoed. "Why, the things she's done to me— Why say . . ."

"That's tough," the reporter murmured.

The fighter's grip on his shoulder relaxed; the big man's arm slid around Bob's neck. He became maudlin and unhappy, weeping for sympathy. "Why, you jus' lemme tell you. . . ." he begged.

"Sure," Bob agreed. "Tell me all about it. Let's go in and sit down."

They went into the living-room. "Y'see, it was this way . . ." the pugilist began.

When Bob left the prize-fighter, he called the office and reported to Dade. "Dungan speaking," he said.

"What you got?" Dade asked hurriedly.

"Jack Brenton. Got his story. About his wife. Good stuff . . ."

Dade interrupted. "Never mind that now," he directed. "There's a big fire in that block of lofts on Chambers Street. Hop a taxi and get there quick as you can. Get busy, Bob."

Bob said crisply: "Right!" He heard the receiver click as Dade hung up. Five minutes later he had located a taxi and was racing toward the fire. As he drew near, he saw the column of smoke that rose from the burning building, black against the sky. "Two or three alarms," he estimated, out of his long experience in such matters. "Lot of girls working in there, too. Probably caught some of them. Damned rat-hole . . ."

He had not enough cash in his pocket to pay the taxi fare; so he showed the man his badge and said curtly: "Charge *Chronicle*." Then he began to worm through the crowd toward the fire. His badge passed him through the fire-lines, into the smother of smoke and the tumult of voices and the throbbing rhythm of the engines. The loft building was five-stories high; and when Bob looked up, he saw, as the smoke thinned and left vistas, the red of flames in every window on the upper floors. Beside an empty hose-wagon, he came upon Brett of the *Journal*, and asked him: "Anybody caught?"

Brett shook his head. "Seven rescues," he said. "Fire started on the top floor, so they mostly had time to run."

"Got the names?" Bob asked.

"Jake's got 'em," said Brett. Jake was the *Chronicle's* police reporter. "He's gone to telephone them in."

Bob nodded. Jake was a good man. He

would have picked up enough of incident and accident to make a story. The rewrite men in the office would do the rest. His, Bob's, job was to look for a feature the other men might have overlooked. . . . And abruptly, he remembered Dade's instructions to Ingalls that morning. Fire escapes; fire-doors. Were they adequate, on this old trap?

There was an alley beside the burning building. He could work in through there and find out, perhaps. . . . At the mouth of the alley, a policeman halted him. Bob showed his fire badge. The policeman said scornfully: "I don't give a damn for that. That wall in there is going to fall in a minute."

Bob laughed. "I was covering fires when you were in the cradle, old man," he said, and slipped by, into the alley. The officer started to pursue, swore, changed his mind, returned to his post. The alley was not an attractive place to enter. It was full of smoke, and sprinkled with bits of glass that still tinkled down in a steady rain from the shattered windows above; and as he had said, the upper part of the wall had been gnawed by the fire till it was like to fall at any moment.

In spite of this, Bob went in. He was not afraid, and he was not excited, and he was not valorous. He was simply matter of fact. The smoke made him cough, and burned his eyes. Nevertheless he located the fire-escape, where it came zigzagging down the wall. Its ladder swung seven feet above the sidewalk. He got a barrel and climbed upon it and so reached the ladder.

He scaled the ladder to the second floor landing. He found there a blank, iron-sheathed door. Locked. He could not move it. "But it probably opens from the inside," he reminded himself. "Let's see."

There was no window on this floor; he looked up and discovered that from the landing above he could reach a window. Flames were streaming thinly out of the windows ten feet above that landing. Nevertheless, Bob did not hesitate. He climbed, straddled the iron rail, kicked in a pane of glass and pushed the sash up. The room within was full of eddying smoke; Bob crawled inside. He wished to reach the hall, test the doors that opened upon the fire-escape from the inside.

Smoke in the room was thick, so he

crouched below it and slipped out into the hall. When he reached the door, he found it adequately equipped with patent bolts of the sort that yielded at a tug. He tried them; the door swung open. The bolts, he saw, were recently installed and in good condition. . . . The open door had created a draft. Smoke, with a hot breath of fire in it, began to pour past him and out through the door.

Fire-escapes all right; doors all right. No story. Time to get out, he decided.

To do so it was necessary to traverse the building. He did this. Bob had seen fires before. Experience and instinct guided him safely. On the stairs he found lines of hose leading up to where a squad of firemen were fighting the fire from within. He followed the hose down and to the front door and so to the street.

The fire, for newspaper purposes, was over. Three alarms, seven rescues, a hundred thousand damage. . . . Bob telephoned the office. Dade asked: "How about fire-escapes?"

"I looked at them," Bob said casually. "They're O. K. Fire-doors all right, too."

Dade said: "Well, you might as well come in."

Bob brushed his clothes and washed his face and hands in a hotel wash-room, before he returned to the office. When he came into the City Room, no one paid him any attention. He went to his desk and wrote the story of Jack Brenton's wife, and handed the manuscript to Dade. The City Editor scanned the pages with swift eyes, said over his shoulder: "Good stuff, Bob." Then tossed the story to the copy-desk. "Top 7," he directed. "Good little local story. But you'd better cut it down. Half a column's enough."

Bob went back to his desk. He was beginning to feel the reaction; he was somewhat tired. So for a little while he sat idly, doing nothing at all.

Then Boswell, the publisher, came in from the corridor; and Bob saw him, and turned to his typewriter, and inserted a sheet of paper, and began to write. He wrote, over and over again:

"The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog."

The little old reporter wished to appear busy. He was, you see, a good deal of a coward; he was desperately afraid of being fired.

She Walks in Beauty

(Continued from page 34)

minute. That's the frightening part. It isn't only the neuralgia any more. It's just desire. That's what's so terrible to me, mama. The way you have been taking it these last months. Just from—desire."

Mrs. Samstag buried her face, shuddering down into her hands.

"Oh, God, my own child against me!"

"No, mama. Why, sweetheart, nobody knows better than I do how sweet and good you are when you are away—from it. We'll fight it together and win! I'm not afraid. It's been worse this last month because you've been nervous, dear. I understand now. You see, I—didn't

dream of you and—Louis Latz. We'll forget—we'll take a little two room apartment of our own, darling, and get your mind on housekeeping and I'll take up stenography or social ser—"

"What good am I anyway? No good. In my own way. In my child's way. A young man like Leo Friedlander crazy to propose and my child can't let him come to the point because she is afraid to leave her mother. Oh, I know—I know more than you think I do. Ruining your life! That's what I am, and mine too!"

Tears now ran in hot cascades down Alma's cheeks.

"Why, mama, as if I cared about anything—just so you—get well."

"I know what I've done. Ruined my baby's life and now—"

"No!"

"Then help me, Alma. Louis wants me for his happiness. I want him for mine. Nothing will cure me like having a good man to live up to. The minute I find myself getting the craving for—it—don't you see, baby, fear that a good husband like Louis could find out such a thing about me would hold me back. See, Alma?"

"That's a wrong basis to start married life on—"

"I'm a woman who needs a man to baby her, Alma. That's the cure for me. Not to let me would be the same as to kill me. I've been a bad, weak woman, Alma, to be so afraid that maybe Leo Friedlander would steal you away from me. We'll make it a double wedding, baby!"

"Mama, mama, I'll never leave you."
"All right then, so you won't think your new father and me want to get rid of you. The first thing we'll pick out in our new home, he said it himself to-night, is Alma's room."

"I tell you it's wrong. It's wrong!"
"The rest with Leo can come later, after I've proved to you for a little while that I'm cured. Alma, don't cry! It's my cure. Just think, a good man. A beautiful home to take my mind off—worry. He said to-night he wants to spend a fortune if necessary to cure—my neuralgia."

"Oh, mama, mama, if it were only—that!"
"Alma, if I promise on my—my life! I never felt the craving so little as I do—now."

"You've said that before—and before."
"But never, with such a wonderful reason. It's the beginning of a new life. I know it. I'm cured!"

"Mama, if I thought you meant it."
"I do. Alma, look at me. This very minute I've a real jumping case of neuralgia. But I wouldn't have anything for it except the electric pad. I feel fine. Strong! Alma, the bad times with me are over."

"Oh, mama, mama, how I pray you're right."
"You'll thank God for the day that Louis Latz proposed to me. Why, I'd rather cut off my right hand than marry a man who could ever live to learn such a—thing about me."

"But it's not fair. We'll have to explain to him, dear, that we hope you're cured now, but—"

"If you do—if you do—I'll kill myself! I won't live to bear that! You don't want me cured. You want to get rid of me, to degrade me until I kill myself! If I was ever anything else than what I am now—to Louis Latz—anything but his ideal—Alma, you won't tell! Kill me, but don't tell—don't tell!"

"Why, you know I wouldn't, sweetheart, if it is so terrible to you. Never."
"Say it again."
"Never."

"As if it hasn't been terrible enough that you should have to know. But it's over, Alma. Your bad times with me are finished. I'm cured."

"But wait a little while, mama, just a year."
"No. No."
"A few months."

"Now. He wants it soon. The sooner the better at our age. Alma, mama's cured! What happiness. Kiss me, darling. So help me God, to keep my promises to you. Cured, Alma, cured."

And so in the end, with a smile on her lips that belied almost to herself the little run of fear through her heart, Alma's last kiss to her mother that night was the long one of felicitation.

And because love, even the talk of it, is so gamey on the lips of woman to woman, they lay in bed that night heart-beat to heart-beat, the electric pad under her pillow warm to the hurt of Mrs. Samstag's brow and talked, these two, deep into the stillness of the hotel night.

The Little Town that Grows Big Men



It doesn't take a taxi or a trolley car to cross it—



They all go to the corner drug store.

You don't need an elevator to reach its top stories—

But there's where they get up early in the morning—

There's where good old human nature shapes the destiny of the nation—

There's where they elect presidents—

There's where big men come from—



When "Uncle Tom" pitches—

There's where they all go to the corner drug store, where Coca-Cola stands out in clear relief for what it is—the straight line between wholesome thirst and delicious and refreshing satisfaction—

The Little American Town.



Coca-Cola was a favorite beverage when towns that have grown big were little towns.

Coca-Cola became a national favorite because it was created to please taste and satisfy thirst.



They also serve who only stand and wait.

Sweet with the natural, nutritious sweetness of pure cane sugar—

Its distinct flavor & perfect blend of choicest savors—



it's easy to see who buys.

Appealing to the eye with the rich, dark amber color of caramel and the lively bubbles of pure, sparkling water that come to a bead at the top—

Coca-Cola is an inimitable combination of good things that nature has made good in the sunshine of nine different climes, nine different countries, that is poured into a single glass and placed before you, wherever you may be when you answer the call of thirst.

Drink
Coca-Cola
DELICIOUS AND REFRESHING
THE COCA-COLA COMPANY, Atlanta, Ga.

"My little baby, who's helped me through such bad times, it's your turn now, Alma, to be care-free, like other girls."

"I'll never leave you mama, even if—he shouldn't want me."

"He will, darling, and does! Those were his words. 'A room for Alma.'"

"I'll never leave you!"

"You will! Much as Louis and me want you with us every minute, we won't stand in your way! That's another reason I'm so happy, Alma. I'm not alone, any more now. Leo's so crazy over you, just waiting for the chance to—pop—"

"Shh-sh-h-h."

"Don't tremble so, darling. Mama knows. He told Mrs. Gronauer last night when she was joking him to buy a ten dollar carnation for the Convalescent Home Bazaar, that he would only take one if it was white, because little white flowers reminded him of Alma Samstag."

"Oh, mama—"

"Say, it is as plain as the nose on your face. He can't keep his eyes off you. He sells goods to Doctor Gronauer's clinic and he says the same thing about him. It makes me so happy, Alma, to think you won't have to hold him off any more."

"I'll never leave you. Never!"

None the less she was the first to drop off to sleep, pink, there in the dark, with the secret of her blushes.

Then for Mrs. Samstag the travail set in. Lying there with her raging head tossing this way and that on the heated pillow, she heard with cruel awareness, the *minutiae*, all the faint but clarified noises that can make a night seem so long. The distant click of the elevator, depositing a night-hawk. A plong of the bed spring. Somebody's cough. A train's shriek. The jerk of plumbing. A window being raised. That creak which lies hidden in every darkness, like a mysterious knee-joint. By three o'clock she was a quivering victim to these petty concepts, and her pillow so explored that not a spot but what was rumpled to the aching lay of her cheek.

Once Alma, as a rule supersensitive to her mother's slightest unrest, floated up for the moment out of her young sleep, but she was very drowsy and very tired and dream-tides were almost carrying her back, as she said:

"Mama, are you all right?"

Simulating sleep, Mrs. Samstag lay tense until her daughter's breathing resumed its light cadence.

Then at four o'clock, the kind of nervousness that Mrs. Samstag had learned to fear, began to roll over her in waves, locking her throat and curling her toes and her fingers, and her tongue up dry against the roof of her mouth.

She must concentrate now—must steer her mind away from the craving!

Now then: West End Avenue. Louis liked the apartments there. Luxurious. Quiet. Residential. Circassian walnut or mahogany dining room? Alma should decide. A baby-grand piano. Later to be Alma's engagement gift from, "Mama and—Papa." No, "Mama and Louis." Better so.

How her neck and her shoulder-blade and now her elbow, were flaming with the pain! She cried a little, far back in her throat with the small hissing noise of a steam-radiator, and tried a poor futile scheme for easing her head in the crotch of her elbow.

Now then: She must knit Louis some neckties. The silk-sweater-stitch would do. Married in a traveling-suit. One of those smart dark-blue twills like Mrs. Gronauer Junior's. Top-coat—sable. Louis' hair thinning. Tonic. Oh God, let me sleep. Please, God. The wheeze rising in her closed throat. That little threatening desire that must not shape itself! It darted with the hither and thither of a bee bumbling against a garden wall. No. No. Ugh! The vast chills of nervousness. The flaming, the craving chills of desire!

Just this last giving-in. This once. To be rested and fresh for him to-morrow. Then never again. The little beaded hand-bag. Oh God, help me. That burning ache to rest and to uncurl of nervousness. All the thousand, thousand little pores of her body, screaming each one, to be placated. They hurt the entire surface of her. That great storm at sea in her head; the crackle of lightning down that arm—

Let me see—circassian walnut—baby-grand—the pores demanding, crying—shrieking—

It was then that Carrie Samstag, even in her lovely pink night-dress, a crone with pain, and the cables out dreadfully in her neck, began by infinitesimal processes to swing herself gently to the side of the bed, unrelaxed inch by unrelaxed inch, softly and with the cunning born of travail.

It was actually a matter of fifteen minutes, that breathless swing toward the floor, the mattress rising after her with scarcely a whisper of its stuffings and her two bare feet landing patly into the pale blue room-slippers, there beside the bed.

Then her bag, the beaded one on the end of the divan. The slow taut feeling for it and the floor that creaked twice, starting the sweat out over her.

It was finally after more tortuous saving of floor creaks and the interminable opening and closing of a door that Carrie Samstag, the beaded bag in her hand, found herself face to face with herself in the mirror of the bathroom medicine chest.

She was shuddering with one of the hot chills, the needle and little glass piston out of the hand-bag and with a dry little insuck of breath, pinching up little areas of flesh from her arm, bent on a good firm perch, as it were.

There were undeniable pock-marks on Mrs. Samstag's right forearm. Invariably it sickened her to see them. Little graves. Oh, oh, little graves. For Alma. Herself. And now Louis. Just once. Just one more little grave—

And Alma, answering her somewhere down in her heart-beats: "No, mama, no, mama. No. No. No."

But all the little pores gaping. Mouths! The pinching up of the skin. Here, this little clean and white area.

"No, mama. No, mama. No. No. No."

"Just once, darling?" Oh—oh—graves for Alma and Louis. No. No. No.

Somehow, some way, with all the little mouths still parched and gaping and the clean and quite white area unblemished, Mrs. Samstag found her way back to bed. She was in a drench of sweat when she got there and the conflagration of neuralgia curiously enough, was now roaring in her ears so that it seemed to her she could hear her pain.

Her daughter lay asleep, with her face to the wall, her flowing hair spread in a fan

against the pillow and her body curled up cozily. The remaining hours of the night, in a kind of waking faint she could never find the words to describe, Mrs. Samstag, with that dreadful dew of her sweat constantly out over her, lay with her twisted lips to the faint perfume of that fan of Alma's flowing hair, her toes curling in and out. Out and in. Toward morning she slept. Actually, sweetly and deeply as if she could never have done with deep draughts of it.

She awoke to the brief patch of sunlight that smiled into their apartment for about eight minutes of each forenoon.

Alma was at the pretty chore of lifting the trays from a hamper of roses. She places a shower of them on her mother's coverlet with a kiss, a deeper and dearer one somehow, this morning.

There was a card and Mrs. Samstag read it and laughed:

Good morning, Carrie.
Louis.

They seemed to her, poor dear, these roses, to be pink with the glory of the coming of the dawn.

On the spur of the moment and because the same precipitate decisions that determined Louis Latz's successes in Wall Street determined him here, they were married the following Thursday in Greenwich, Connecticut, without even allowing Carrie time for the blue twill traveling suit. She wore her brown velvet instead, looking quite modish, and a sable wrap, gift of the groom, lending genuine magnificence.

Alma was there, of course, in a beautiful fox scarf, also gift of the groom, and locked in a white kind of tensiety that made her seem more than ever like a little white flower to Leo Friendlander, the sole other attendant, and who during the ceremony yearned at her with his gaze. But her eyes were squeezed tight against his, as if to forbid herself the consciousness that life seemed suddenly so richly sweet to her—oh, so richly sweet!

There was a time during the first months of the married life of Louis and Carrie Latz, when it seemed to Alma, who in the sanctity of her lovely little ivory bedroom all appointed in rose-enamel toilet trifles, could be prayerful with the peace of it, that the old Carrie, who could come pale and terrible out of her drugged nights, belonged to some grimacing and chimeric past. A dead past that had buried its dead and its hatchet.

There had been a month at Hot Springs in the winter-green heart of Virginia, and whatever Louis may have felt in his heart, of his right to the privacy of these honeymoon days, was carefully belied on his lips, and at Alma's depriving him now and then of his wife's company, packing her off to rest when he wanted a climb with her up a mountain slope or a drive over piney roads, he could still smile and pinch her cheek.

"You're stingy to me with my wife, Alma," he said to her upon one of these provocations. "I don't believe she's got a daughter at all, but a little policeman instead."

And Alma smiled back, out of the agony of her constant consciousness that she was insinuating her presence upon him, and resolutely, so that her fear for him should always subordinate her fear of him,

she bit down her sensitiveness in proportion to the rising tide of his growing, but still politely held in check, bewilderment.

One day, these first weeks of their marriage, because she saw the dreaded signal of the muddy pools under her mother's eyes and the little quivering nerve beneath the temple, she shut him out of her presence for a day and a night, and when he came fuming up every few minutes from the hotel veranda, miserable and fretting, met him at the closed door of her mother's darkened room and was adamant.

"It won't hurt if I tiptoe in and sit with her," he pleaded.

"No, Louis. No one knows how to get her through these spells like I do. The least excitement will only prolong her pain."

He trotted off then down the hotel corridor, with a strut to his resentment that was bantam and just a little fighty.

That night as Alma lay beside her mother, fighting sleep and watching, Carrie rolled her eyes sidewise with the plea of a stricken dog in them.

"Alma," she whispered, "for God's sake. Just this once. To tide me over. One shot—darling. Alma, if you love me?"

Later, there was a struggle between them that hardly bears relating. A lamp was overturned. But toward morning, when Carrie lay exhausted, but at rest in her daughter's arms, she kept muttering in her sleep:

"Thank you, baby. You saved me. Never leave me, Alma. Never—never—never. You saved me, Alma."

And then the miracle of those next months. The return to New York. The happily busy weeks of furnishing and the unlimited gratifications of the well-filled purse. The selection of the limousine with the special body that was fearfully and wonderfully made in mulberry upholstery with mother-of-pearl caparisons. The fourteen-room apartment on West End Avenue, with four baths, drawing-room of pink brocaded walls and Carrie's Roman bathroom that was precisely as large as her old hotel sitting-room, with two full length wall-mirrors, a dressing-table canopied in white lace over white satin and the marble bath itself, two steps down and with the rubber curtains that swished after.

There were evenings when Carrie, who loved the tyranny of things with what must have been a survival within her of the bazaar instinct, would fall asleep almost directly after dinner, her head back against her husband's shoulder, roundly tired out after a day all cluttered up with matching the blue upholstery of their bedroom with taffeta bed-hangings.

Latz liked her so, with her fragrantly coiffured head, scarcely gray, back against his shoulder and with his newspapers—Wall Street journals and the comic weeklies which he liked to read—would sit an entire evening thus, moving only when his joints rebelled, and his pipe smoke carefully directed away from her face.

Weeks and weeks of this and already Louis Latz's trousers were a little out of crease and Mrs. Latz after eight o'clock and under cover of a very fluffy and very expensive negligée, would unhook her stays.

Sometimes friends came in for a game of small-stake poker, but after the second month they countermanded the standing



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TIME was years ago, when you had to go to Paris, to the Ve-o-lay Shop shown above, at 29 Boulevard Des Italiens, in order to buy Violet (Ve-o-lay) requisites. But today, there are thousands of shops all over the United States where you can buy them. You can get them almost anywhere.

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Ask for Violet (Ve-o-lay) requisites at your favorite shop. If your dealer does not have the particular requisite you want, he can get it for you if you insist, because there isn't a toilet requisite that cannot be supplied from the Violet (Ve-o-lay) line. Write for a copy of the dainty Violet (Ve-o-lay) book. Frank M. Prindle & Company (sole importers), 71 West 35th Street, New York City.



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29 BOULEVARD DES ITALIENS, PARIS, FRANCE

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order for Saturday night musical comedy seats. So often they discovered it was pleasanter to remain at home. Indeed, during these days of household adjustment, as many as four evenings a week Mrs. Latz dozed there against her husband's shoulder, until about ten, when he kissed her awake to forage with him in the great, white porcelain refrigerator and then to bed.

And Alma. Almost, she tiptoed through these months. Not that her scorching awareness of what must have crouched low in Louis' mind ever diminished. Sometimes, although still never by word, she could see the displeasure mount in his face.

If she entered in on a tête-à-tête, as she did once, when by chance she had sniffed the curative smell of spirits of camphor on the air of a room through which her mother had passed, and came to drag her off that night to share her own lace-covered and ivory bed.

Again: upon the occasion of an impulsively planned motor trip and week-end to Lakewood, her intrusion had been so obvious.

"Want to join us, Alma?"

"O—yes—thank you, Louis."

"But I thought you and Leo were——"

"No, no, I'd rather go with you and mama, Louis."

Even her mother had smiled rather strainedly. Louis' invitation, politely uttered, had said so plainly: "Are we two never to be alone. Your mother and I?"

Oh, there was no doubt that Louis Latz was in love and with all the delayed fervor of first youth.

There was something rather throat-catching about his treatment of her mother that made Alma want to cry.

He would never tire of marveling, not alone at the wonder of her, but at the wonder that she was his.

"No man has ever been as lucky in women as I have, Carrie," he told her once in Alma's hearing. "It seemed to me that after—my little mother, there couldn't ever be another—and now you! You!"

At the business of sewing some beads on a lamp-shade, Carrie looked up, her eyes dewy.

"And I felt that way about one good husband," she said, "and now I see there could be two."

Alma tiptoed out.

The third month of this, she was allowing Leo Friedlander his two evenings a week. Once to the theater in a modish little sedan car which Leo drove himself. One evening at home in the rose and mauve drawing-room. It delighted Louis and Carrie slyly to have in their friends for poker over the dining-room table these evenings, leaving the young people somewhat indirectly chaperoned until as late as midnight. Louis' attitude with Leo was one of winks, quirks, slaps on the back and the curving voice of innuendo.

"Come on in, Leo, the water's fine!"

"Louis!" This from Alma stung to crimson and not arch enough to feign that she did not understand.

"Loo, don't tease," said Carrie, smiling, but then closing her eyes as if to invoke help to want this thing to come to pass.

But Leo was frankly the lover, kept not without difficulty on the edge of his ardor. A city youth with gymnasium bred shoulders, fine, pole vaulter's length of limb and a clean tan skin that bespoke cold drubbings with Turkish towels.

And despite herself, Alma, who was not without a young girl's feelings for nice detail, could thrill to this sartorial svelteness and to the patent-leather lay of his black hair which caught the light like a polished floor.

The kind of sweetness he found in Alma he could never articulate even to himself. In some ways she seemed hardly to have the pressure of vitality to match his, but on the other hand, just that slower beat to her may have heightened his sense of prowess. His greatest delight seemed to lie in her pallid loveliness. "White Honeysuckle," he called her and the names of all the beautiful white flowers he knew. And then one night, to the rattle of poker chips from the remote dining-room, he jerked her to him without preamble, kissing her mouth down tightly against her teeth.

"My sweetheart. My little, white carnation sweetheart. I won't be held off any longer. I'm going to carry you away for my little moon-flower wife."

She sprang back prettier than he had ever seen her in the dishevelment from where his embrace had dragged at her hair.

"You mustn't," she cried, but there was enough of the conquering male in him to read easily into this a mere plating over her desire.

"You can't hold me at arm's length any longer. You've maddened me for months. I love you. You love me. You do. You do," and crushed her to him, but this time his pain and his surprise genuine as she sprang back, quivering.

"You—I—mustn't!" she said, frantic to keep her lips from twisting, her little lacy fribble of a handkerchief a mere string from winding.

"Mustn't what?"

"Mustn't," was all she could repeat and not weep her words.

"Won't—I—do?"

"It's—mama."

"What?"

"You see—I—she's all alone."

"You adorable, she's got a brand-new husky husband."

"No—you don't—understand."

Then, on a thunder-clap of inspiration, hitting his knee,

"I have it. Mama-baby! That's it. My girlie is a cry-baby, mama-baby!" And made to slide along the divan toward her, but up flew her two small hands, like fans.

"No," she said with the little bang back in her voice which steadied him again. "I mustn't! You see, we're so close. Sometimes it's more as if I were the mother and she my little girl."

Misery made her dumb.

"Why don't you know, dear, that your mother is better able to take care of herself than you are. She's bigger and stronger. You—you're a little white flower."

"Leo—give me time. Let me think."

"A thousand thanks, Alma, but I love you. I love you and want so terribly for you to love me back."

"I—do."

"Then tell me with kisses."

Again she pressed him to arm's length.

"Please, Leo. Not yet. Let me think. Just one day. To-morrow."

"No, no. Now."

"To-morrow."

"When?"

"Evening."

"No, morning."

"All right. Leo—to-morrow morning—"

"I'll sit up all night and count every second in every minute and every minute in every hour."

She put up her soft little fingers to his lips.

"Dear boy," she said.

And then they kissed and after a little swoon to his nearness she struggled like a caught bird and a guilty one.

"Please go, Leo," she said, "leave me alone—"

"Little mama-baby sweetheart," he said. "I'll build you a nest right next to hers. Good night, little White Flower. I'll be waiting, and remember, counting every second of every minute and every minute of every hour."

For a long time she remained where he had left her, forward on the pink divan, her head with a listening look to it, as if waiting an answer for the prayers that she sent up.

At two o'clock that morning, by what intuition she would never know, and with such leverage that she landed out of bed plump on her two feet, Alma, with all her faculties into trace like fire-horses, sprang out of sleep.

It was a matter of twenty steps across the hall. In the white tiled Roman bathroom, the muddy circles suddenly out and angry beneath her eyes, her mother was standing before one of the full-length mirrors—snickering.

There was a fresh little grave on the inside of her right fore arm.

Sometimes in the weeks that followed, a sense of the miracle of what was happening would clutch at Alma's throat like a fear.

Louis did not know.

That the old neuralgic recurrences were more frequent again, yes. Already plans for a summer trip abroad, on a curative mission bent, were taking shape. There was a famous nerve specialist, the one who had worked such wonders on his little mother's cruelly rheumatic limbs, reassuringly foremost in his mind.

But except that there were not infrequent and sometimes twenty-four hour sieges when he was denied the sight of his wife, he had learned with a male's acquiescence to the frailties of the other sex, to submit, and with no great understanding of pain, to condone.

And as if to atone for these more or less frequent lapses there was something pathetic, even a little heart-breaking, in Carrie's zeal for his wellbeing. No duty too small. One night she wanted to unlace his shoes and even shine them, would have, in fact, except for his fierce catching of her into his arms and for some reason, his tonsils aching as he kissed her.

Once after a "spell" she took out every garment from his wardrobe and kissing them piece by piece, put them back again and he found her so, and they cried together, he of happiness.

In his utter beatitude, even his resentment of Alma continued to grow but slowly. Once, when after forty-eight hours she forbade him rather fiercely an entrance into his wife's room, he shoved her aside almost rudely, but at Carrie's little shriek of remonstrance from the darkened room, backed out shamefacedly and apologized next day in the conciliatory language of a tiny wrist-watch.

But a break came, as she knew and feared it must.

One evening during one of these attacks, when for two days Carrie had not appeared at the dinner table, Alma, entering when the meal was almost over, seated herself rather exhaustedly at her mother's place opposite her stepfather.

He had reached the stage when that little unconscious usurpation in itself could annoy him.

"How's your mother?" he asked, dourly for him.

"She's asleep."

"Funny. This is the third attack this month and each time it lasts longer. Confound that neuralgia."

"She's easier now."

He pushed back his plate.

"Then I'll go in and sit with her while she sleeps."

She who was so fastidiously dainty of manner, half rose, spilling her soup.

"No," she said, "you mustn't! Not now!" And sat down again hurriedly, wanting not to appear perturbed.

A curious thing happened then to Louis. His lower lip came pursing out like a little shelf and a hitherto unsuspected look of pigginess fattened over his rather plump face.

"You quit butting into me and my wife's affairs, you, or get the hell out of here," he said, without changing his voice or his manner.

She placed her hand to the almost unbearable flutter of her heart.

"Louis! You mustn't talk like that to-me!"

"Don't make me say something I'll regret. You! Only take this tip, you! There's one of two things you better do. Quit trying to come between me and her or—get out."

"I—she's sick."

"Now, she ain't. Not as sick as you make out. You're trying, God knows why, to keep us apart. I've watched you. I know your sneaking kind. Still water runs deep. You've never missed a chance since we're married to keep us apart. Shame!"

"I—she—"

"Now mark my word, if it wasn't to spare her, I'd have invited you out long ago. Haven't you got any pride?"

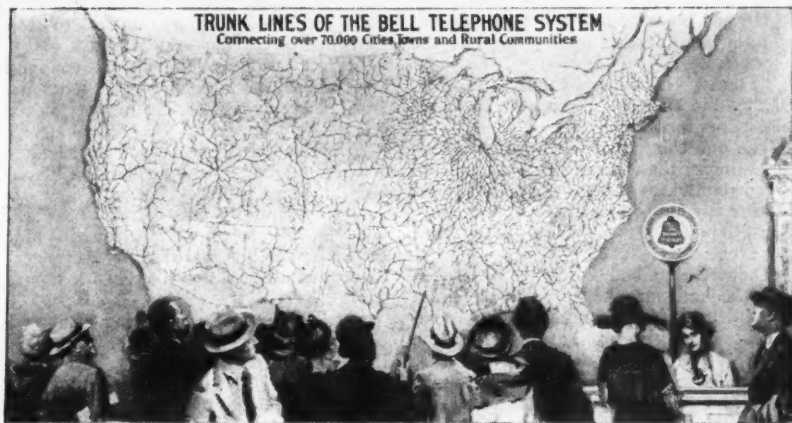
"I have. I have," she almost moaned and could have crumpled up there and swooned in her humiliation.

"You're not a regular girl. You're a she-devil. That's what you are! Trying to come between your mother and me. Ain't you ashamed? What is it you want?"

"Louis—I don't—"

"First you turn down a fine fellow like Leo Friendlander, so he don't come to the house any more and then you take out on us whatever is eating you, by trying to come between me and the finest woman that ever lived. Shame. Shame."

"Louis," she said. "Louis," wringing her hands in a dry wash of agony, "can't you understand? She'd rather have me. It makes her nervous trying to pretend to you that she's not suffering when she is. That's all, Louis. You see, she's not ashamed to suffer before me. Why, Louis—that's all. Why should I want to come between you and her? Isn't she dearer to me than anything in the world and haven't you been the best friend to me a girl could have? That's all—Louis."



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He was placated and a little sorry and did not insist further upon going into the room.

"Funny," he said. "Funny," and adjusting his spectacles, snapped open his newspaper for a lonely evening.

The one thing that perturbed Alma almost more than anything else, as the dreaded cravings grew, with each siege her mother becoming more brutish and more given to profanity, was where she obtained the drug.

The well-thumbed old doctor's prescription she had purloined even back in the hotel days, and embargo and legislation were daily making more and more furtive and prohibitive the traffic in narcotics.

Once Alma, mistakenly too, she thought later, had suspected a chauffeur of collusion with her mother and abruptly dismissed him. To Louis's rage.

"What's the idea," he said out of Carrie's hearing, of course. "Who's running this shebang anyway?"

Once after Alma had guarded her well for days, scarcely leaving her side, Carrie laughed sardonically up into her daughter's face, her eyes as glassy and without swimming fluid as a doll's.

"I get it! But wouldn't you like to know where? Yah!"

And to Alma's horror she slapped her quite roundly across the cheek.

And then one day, after a long period of quiet, when Carrie had lavished her really great wealth of contrite love upon her daughter and husband, spending on Alma and loading her with gifts of jewelry and finery to somehow express her grateful adoration of her; paying her husband the secret penance of twofold fidelity to his well-being and every whim, Alma, returning from a trip, taken reluctantly, and at her mother's bidding, down to the basement trunk-room, found her gone, a modish black-lace hat and the sable coat missing from the closet.

It was early afternoon, sunlit and pleasantly cold.

The first rush of panic and the impulse to dash after, stayed, she forced herself down into a chair, striving with the utmost difficulty for coherence of procedure.

Where in the half hour of her absence had her mother gone? Matinee? Impossible! Walking. Hardly probable. Upon inquiry in the kitchen neither of the maids had seen nor heard her depart. Motoring? With a hand that trembled in spite of itself, Alma telephoned the garage. Car and chauffeur were there. Incredible as it seemed, Alma, upon more than one occasion had lately been obliged to remind her mother that she was becoming careless of the old pointedly rosy hands. Manicurist? She telephoned the Bon Ton Beauty Parlor. No. Where, oh God, where? Which way to begin? That was what troubled her most. To start right, so as not to lose a precious second.

Suddenly, and for no particular reason, Alma began a hurried search through her mother's dresser-drawers of lovely personal appointments.

A one inch square of newspaper clipping apparently gouged from the sheet with a hairpin, caught her eye from the top of one of the gold backed hair-brushes. Dawningly, Alma read.

It described in brief detail the innovation of a newly equipped Narcotic Clinic on the Bowery below Canal Street, pro-

vided to medically administer to the pathological cravings of addicts.

Fifteen minutes later Alma emerged from the subway at Canal Street and with three blocks toward her destination ahead, started to run.

At the end of the first block she saw her mother, in the sable coat and the black-lace hat, coming toward her.

Her first impulse was to run faster and yoo-hoo, but she thought better of it and by biting her lips and digging her fingernails, was able to slow down to a casual walk.

Carrie's fur coat was flaring open and because of the quality of her attire down there where the bilge waters of the city-tide flow and eddy, stares followed her.

Once, to the stoppage of Alma's heart, she halted and said a brief word to a truckman as he crossed the sidewalk with a bill of lading. He hesitated, laughed and went on.

Then she quickened her pace and went on, but as if with a sense of being followed, because constantly as she walked, she jerked a step, to look back, and then again, over her shoulder.

A second time she stopped, this time to address a little nub of a woman without a hat and lugging one-sidedly a stack of men's basted waistcoats, evidently for home-work in some tenement. She looked and muttered her un-understanding of whatever Carrie had to say and shambled on.

Then Mrs. Latz spied her daughter, greeting her without surprise or any particular recognition.

"Thought you could fool me! Heh, Louis? Alma."

"Mama, it's Alma. It's all right. Don't you remember, we had this appointment? Come, dear."

"No, you don't! That's a man following. Shh-h-h-h, Louis. I was fooling. I went up to him (snicker) and I said to him, 'Give you five dollars for a doctor's certificate.' That's all I said to him, or any of them. He's in a white carnation, Louis. You can find him by the—it's on his coat lapel. He's coming! Quick—"

"Mama, there's no one following. Wait, I'll call a taxi!"

"No, you don't! He tried to put me in a taxi, too. No, you don't!"

"Then the subway, dearest. Yo I'll sit quietly beside Alma in the subway, won't you, Carrie. Alma's so tired."

Suddenly Carrie began to whimper.

"My baby! Don't let her see me. My baby. What am I good for? I've ruined her life. My precious sweetheart's life. I hit her once—Louis—in the mouth. God won't forgive me for that."

"Yes, He will, dear, if you come."

"It bled. Alma, tell him mama lost her doctor's certificate. That's all I said to him—give you five dollars for a doctor's certificate—he had a white carnation—right lapel—stingy! Quick! He's following!"

"Sweetheart, please, there's no one coming."

"Don't tell! Oh, Alma darling—mama's ruined your life. Her sweetheart baby's life."

"No, darling, you haven't. She loves you if you'll come home with her, dear, to bed, before Louis gets home and—"

"No. No. He mustn't see. Never this bad—was I, darling—oh—oh—"

"No, mama—never—this bad. That's why we must hurry."

"Best man that ever lived. Best baby. Ruin. Ruin."

"Mama, you—you're making Alma tremble so that she can scarcely walk if you drag her back so. There's no one following, dear. I won't let any one harm you. Please, sweetheart—a taxicab."

"No. I tell you he's following. He tried to put me into a taxicab."

"Then mama, listen. Do you hear! Alma wants you to listen. If you don't—she'll faint. People are looking. Now I want you to turn square around and look. No, look again. You see now, there's no one following. Now, I want you to cross the street over there to the subway. Just with Alma, who loves you. There's no body following. Just with Alma who loves you."

And then Carrie, whose lace hat was crazily on the back of her head, relaxed enough so that through the enormous maze of the traffic of trucks and the heavier drags of the lower city, she and her daughter could wind their way.

"My baby. My poor Louis," she kept saying. "The worst I've ever been. Oh—Alma—Louis—waiting—before we get there—Louis."

It was in the tightest tangle of the crossing and apparently on this conjuring of her husband, that Carrie jerked suddenly free of Alma's frailier hold.

"No—no—not home—now. Him. Alma!" And darted back against the breast of the down side of the traffic.

There was scarcely more than the quick rotation of her arm around with the spoke of a truck wheel, so quickly she went down.

It was almost a miracle, her kind of death, because out of all that jam of tonnage, she carried only one bruise, a faint one, near the brow.

And the wonder was that Louis Latz in his grief was so proud.

"To think," he kept saying over and over again and unabashed at the way his face twisted, "to think they should have happened to me. Two such women in one lifetime, as my little mother—and her. Fat little old Louis to have had those two. Why just the memory of my Carrie—is almost enough—to think old me should have a memory like that—it is almost enough—isn't it, Alma?"

She kissed his hand.

That very same, that dreadful night, almost without her knowing it, her throat-tearing sobs broke loose, her face to the waistcoat of Leo Friedlander.

He held her close. Very, very close.

"Why sweetheart," he said, "I could cut out my heart to help you. Why, sweetheart. Shh-h-h, remember what Louis says. Just the beautiful memory—of—her—is—wonderful—"

"Just—the b-beautiful—memory—you'll always have it too—of her—my mama—won't you, Leo? Won't you?"

"Always," he said, when the tight grip in his throat had eased enough.

"Say—it again—Leo."

"Always."

She could not know how dear she became to him then, because not ten minutes before, from the very lapel against which her cheek lay pressed, he had unpinned a white carnation.

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